

AS THE TWIG IS BENT



THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

NEW YORK • BOSTON • CHICAGO
DALLAS • ATLANTA • SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

LONDON • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA
MADRAS • MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
OF CANADA, LIMITED

TORONTO

AS THE TWIG IS BENT

By *LESLIE B. HOHMAN, M.D.*

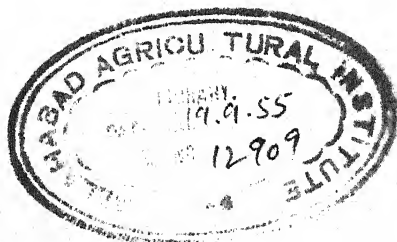
*Associate in Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins Medical School;
Assistant Visiting Psychiatrist to the Johns Hopkins Hospital*

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY • NEW YORK • 1943

COPYRIGHT, 1939, 1940
By LESLIE B. HOHMAN

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages in connection with a review written for inclusion in magazine or newspaper.

Reprinted, May, 1940.
Reprinted September, 1940.
Reprinted December, 1940.
Reprinted February, 1941.
Reprinted June, 1941.
Reprinted April, 1942.
Reprinted March, 1943.
Reprinted June, 1943.



: Printed in the United States of America : c

TO
MY LIFELONG FRIEND
AND LITERARY MONITOR
Montgomery Wright





FOREWORD

THERE ARE MANY BOOKS CONCERNING the education of children and advice to parents. Very few are built on the experience of one who is not only an investigator or consultant but also a genuine practitioner intent on seeing good advice actually carried out. Dr. Hohman's book is throughout an exposé of what is intelligent in terms of actual life, free of cultism, and encouraging those who have to bear the real burden of the situation to aim at training and well-guided common sense, open and sound and practically inquiring, neither too dogmatic nor a mere *laissez faire*. Wherever there might be differences of opinion, the direction is one of respect for common ground and action based on balanced experience, with attention directed toward character formation and habit building and an all-round development.

ADOLF MEYER.

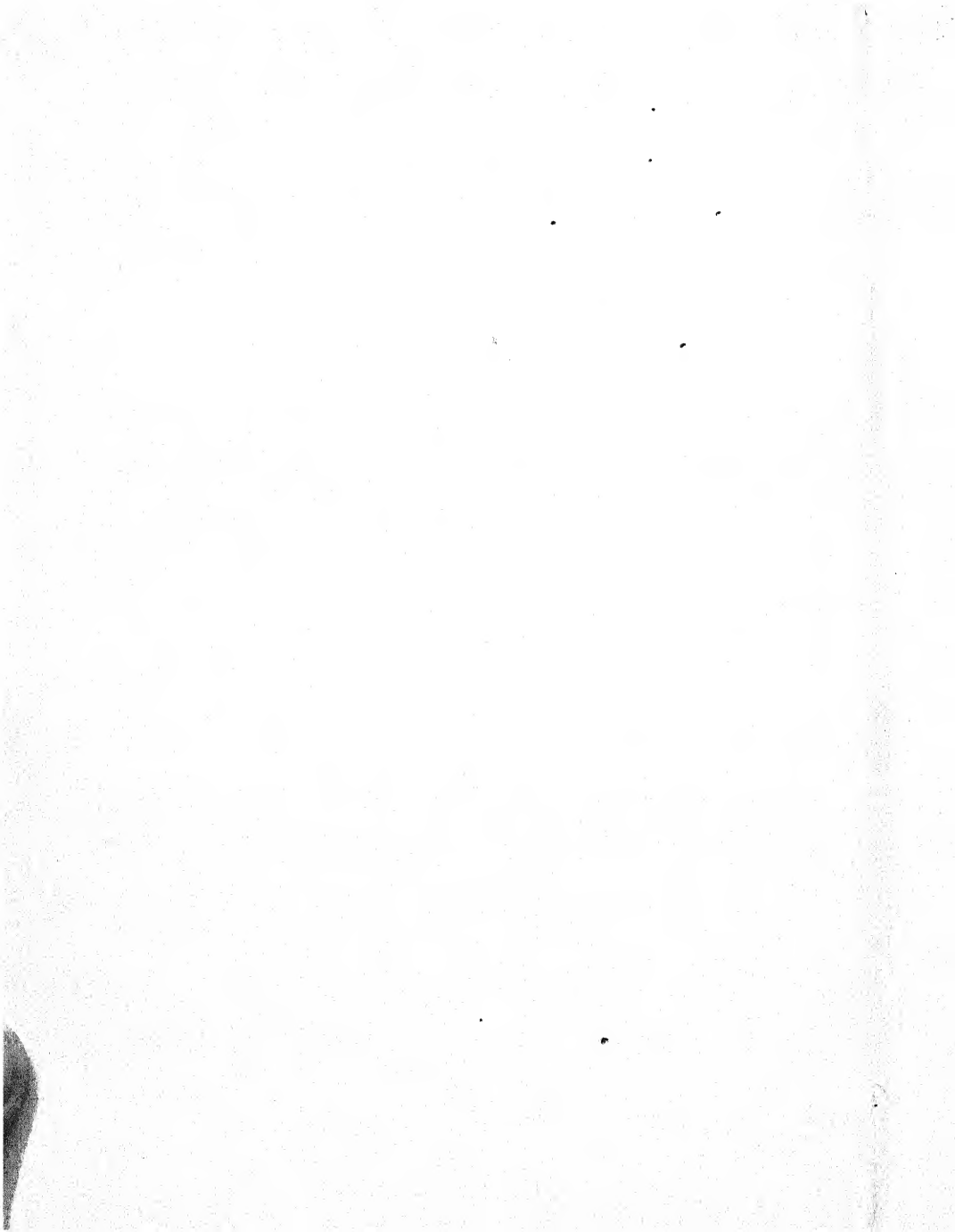
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

—POPE

- Tender twigs are bent with ease,
Aged trees do break with bending.

—ROBERT SOUTHWELL

If you are constantly unhappy, constantly disillusioned, or constantly unable to attain your ambitions, look for basic faults that gained the upper hand in you before you were 15. . . . The reasons are there. They are the same reasons that will be trained into your children if you are not careful.



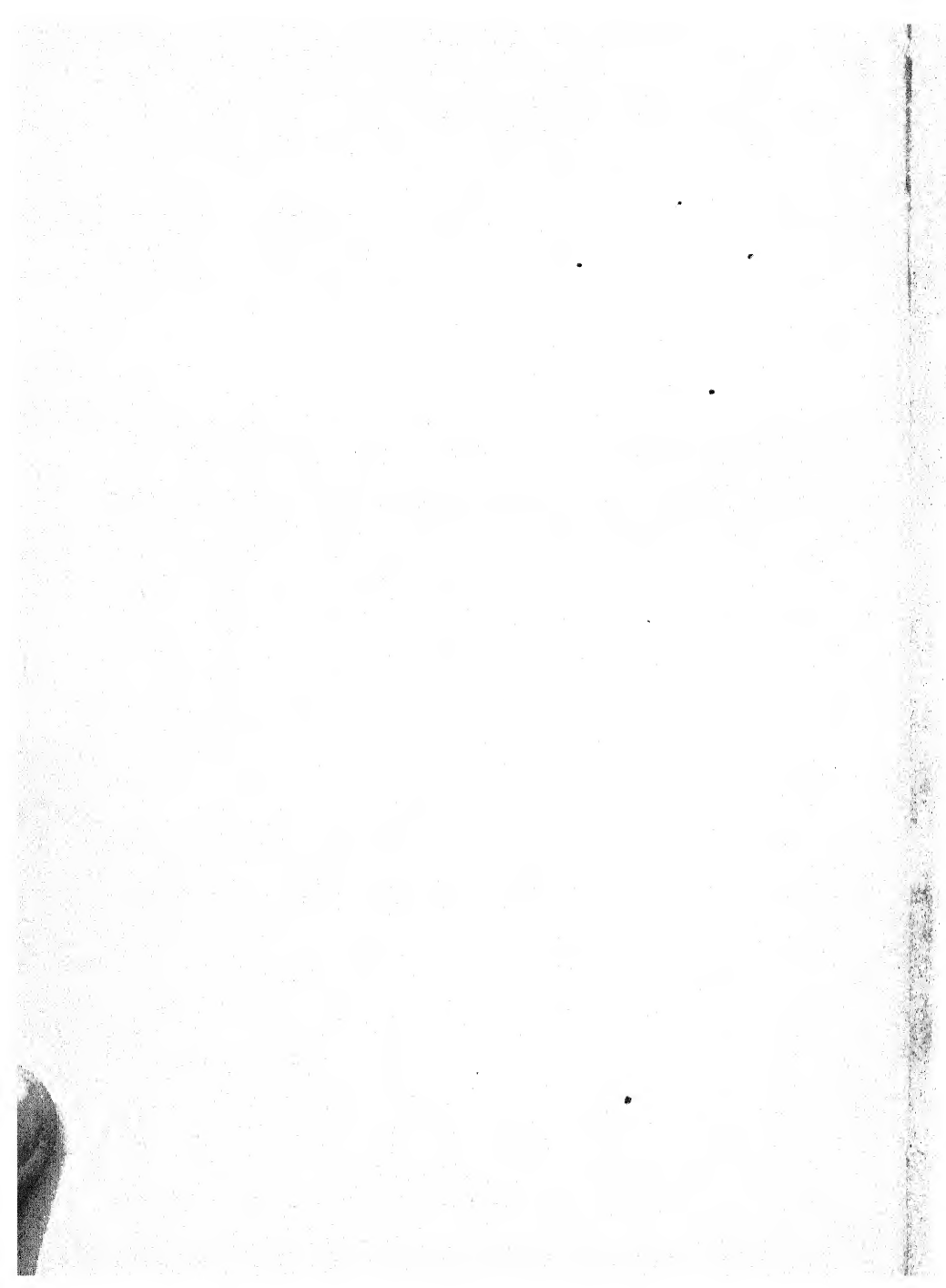
CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I CONTROL YOUR CHILD FOR HAPPINESS	1
II WILL THEY OUTGROW IT?	13
III BAD HABITS LIVE ON DIVIDENDS	32
IV SPANK—IF YOU MUST	44
V GOOD COMPANIONS, INCLUDING PARENTS	59
VI ULTRAMODERN EDUCATION, MOVIES, RADIO, AND OTHER EXCITEMENTS	64
VII —AND NO WORK MAKES JACK DULLER	85
VIII EMPLOYMENT PLANS FOR CHILDREN	99
IX WHAT IF YOUR PEOPLE ARE UNSTABLE?	116
X ILLNESS—REAL AND OTHERWISE	120
XI TO HEALTH AND GOOD APPETITE	130
XII WHY SO TEMPERISH, GLOOMY, AND DISCOURAGED?	140
XIII DAYDREAMS AND FAIRY TALES HAVE THEIR USES	151
XIV FROM SUCH COMES THE KINGDOM OF LIARS . . .	159
XV HONESTY CAN BE MADE ATTRACTIVE	168
XVI TIMIDITY—OUR GREAT INHIBITOR	178
XVII WE CAN BUILD A BRAVER WORLD	185
XVIII THE “INSIDE” STORY OF ATTRACTIVENESS . . .	196



CHAPTER	PAGE
XIX A LEASH FOR THE GREEN-EYED IMP	212
XX ADULTS—WEANED FROM WEAK RELIANCE . . .	220
XXI HOW CAN SEX TRUTH BE KEPT TRUE?	228
XXII LET'S ENCOURAGE HEALTHY DECENCY	237
XXIII GIRLISH BOYS AND BOYISH GIRLS	248
XXIV ESCAPADES OF THE YEARS OF INNOCENCE . . .	256
XXV SWEET SIXTEEN AND—	271
XXVI YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS . . .	283

AS THE TWIG IS BENT



*CONTROL YOUR CHILD
FOR HAPPINESS*

THE ARRIVAL of nearly six thousand unspoiled babies was recorded today on the birth registration rolls of the United States alone. That is assuming this was a good, average day. Nearly all of them, and nearly all of the additional thousands who greeted the light within the last few hours in other parts of the world, are normally alert and intelligent. The vast majority shows no serious emotional or nervous flaws. They are starting with a natural equipment that could give them deeply satisfying lives. Most of them will grow into men and women who will not find life deeply satisfying, and many will be habitually unhappy and frustrated.

This will be largely the fault of their parents. With all their unquestioned love and all their good intentions, mothers and fathers do not work as hard nor as efficiently as they should at the most important job in the world. Great numbers fall into the notion that all the self-defeating traits that appear in their children result from inborn disposition or from nervous or glandular faults that cannot be changed. Others, who conscientiously try to keep abreast of the latest scientific advances, are led astray by their own puzzled misinterpretations of modern psychology doctrines, like "no repression." Still more, simply drift along, trusting to luck to mold their children's future.

In a Pulitzer Prize comedy a loveable, addled matron dabbles at authorship for years because a typewriter happened to be delivered to her one day. In our homes there are loveable, addled matrons a good deal like her. A baby is delivered. The mother accepts it with the serene impression that a talent for motherhood comes with it.

School teachers, of course, are expected to see the importance of educating children when they undertake the work. Then they spend eight hours a day for several years in preparation.

Competent parenthood is looked upon generally as a sort of magic endowment that makes study unnecessary. No grasp of the responsibilities and no vision of the great possibilities are considered essential when entering the career. Sometimes there is no special desire for children—merely a lucky accident like the typewriter of the authoress in the play. No special thought is given to new character problems that arise from day to day. No plan of action is outlined.

This might do little harm if the preparation for our lives required only the rudimentary knacks a mother cat instinctively teaches her kittens. Unfortunately, civilized children have to learn more complicated lessons than how to wash their faces with their paws. The warm love, instincts, and intuition upon which parents depend so much can lead them to do the very things that train a child in unfitness.

The huge sale of books on adult psychology gives some indication of the number of persons who feel that they are not equipped to get the most out of life. How many of the mothers and fathers who attempt belatedly to make themselves over have read and studied how to prevent

their children from ever acquiring the handicaps they deplore in themselves?

If a child shows characteristics his parents are glad to recognize as their strengths, or the little foibles they consider part of their charm, they exclaim, "Blood will tell! He is exactly like you in this, and exactly like me in that, dear." Their beaming approval encourages repeated practice and steady reinforcement of the traits. If a characteristic is annoying, we hear such remarks as, "That child is his father's people all over again."

Amusing, in a way; but the trouble is that parents are discouraged from persevering work to make the child any different when they believe his faults run in the family. The trouble does not stop with minor flaws. I could cite case after case of children brought to me for grave psychologic maladjustments—most of them avoidable, in my opinion—in which earlier chances to correct the difficulties with comparative ease had not been seized. One or both of the parents had traced the behavior to indelible quirks passed down in the blood stream from a grandparent, or sometimes from remote ancestors.

These mothers and fathers were blind to a truth closer home. Their children were the living images of them. They themselves were erratic in the training they gave and the example their own personalities set for imitation. Those are much more direct and predictable influences than inheritance.

Throughout the ages a popular search for remote, romantic, and uncontrollable factors has hindered the sensible understanding and training of emotions, thinking, and actions—in other words the full realization of our possibilities. It still does. Human beings always are so in-

trigued by the mysterious that they are tempted to ignore obvious, everyday truths.

I believe the lure of mystery helps to explain the preoccupation of advanced parents and educators with the unconscious, which, they suppose, has to assert itself at all times to avoid dire consequences.

Carrying figurative banners with that strange device—"No Repression!"—and shields blazoned with emblems of self-expression, thousands of rather objectionable youngsters now are riding toward falls. Their bad manners masquerade as frankness and honesty. It is difficult to convince them how much their lives would be smoothed by pleasant conduct and decent consideration of others. They have never made the test, and probably would be unimpressed by the practical remark of John Stuart Mill in defense of the pleasures of poetry as against the pleasures of the hog that a trial of both would leave no doubts.

It is high time that some of us who cannot be taunted out of court as old-fashioned and uninformed begin to do what we can to clarify this issue for fathers, mothers, teachers, and nurses whose common sense clashes against their own erroneous impressions of basically sound theories.

Even the most ardent psychoanalyst of today when faced by a boy who persisted in throwing stones at his playmates would see no virtue in the stone throwing, as such. He surely would suggest that it be replaced by some expression of the lad's praiseworthy eagerness for action a little less discouraging to the praiseworthy eagerness of the playmates.

The able men upon whose current scientific work the further advance of this particular school depends would

say repressions are bad only when deeply hidden impulses find no outlet—either in direct expression or in some substituted expression acceptable to the individual. That is when repressions cause an *unreconciled* conflict between an individual's *submerged* inner urges and those ideals, inclinations, and actions which he *recognizes* and admits in himself. The suppression of the more conscious desires does not even fall under the psychoanalytic conception of repression. The unconscious is its special field—the underlying yearnings in us of which we are not aware.

In one of the instances that came to my attention, the series of clinging kisses an eight-year-old girl gave every man who visited her parents became the subject of much friendly amusement. The father and mother spoke proudly of her lack of inhibitions. The joking before the child as she ran impetuously from one man to another was of this type: "You older girls had better watch this. You might learn a few things." The trick guaranteed that the pretty daughter's entrance at every gathering of guests would be dramatic. Her parents learned too late that what they encouraged as sweet, innocent self-expression and affection at eight looked altogether different at sixteen.

Let's apply common sense. First, there is a question how much of the demonstration in its earlier stages came from a spontaneous, natural affection drive and how much was created by the human inclination to command admiring attention. Second, should the child have been inhibited? Certainly not. However it started, the friendly, outgoing impulse was wholesome and useful to her development. It would have been harmful to smother it; but this is the distinction I want to make plain—it obvi-

ously should have been placed under some control and *redirected* into outlets less dangerous to the girl's future happiness.

If we do not repress our children's impulses, the world will do it later—and may give them sharp pain by the severity of the tardy discipline.

Social order in any conceivable society means that many impulses have to be put aside. When we wish to avoid unpleasant entanglements, we cannot invariably yield to the inclination to lie—except at the cost of lost friendships and opportunities, which will put new restrictions upon us. If we happen to covet our neighbor's ox . . . or anything that is our neighbor's, we cannot walk over any time and take it. The ox itself might frustrate our inclination by knocking us down. If not, there is our neighbor, who may have unrepressed impulses of his own. Then the courts—they probably would not be persuaded by a plea of the necessity of expressing our egos and aggression.

Still, on issues in child training that a little thought should make as clear-cut as those just mentioned, parents are sunk into anxious puzzlement over how to achieve "no repression" in their sons and daughters without making it impossible for anyone to live with them.

We are seeking, of course, to train children who will not be intimidated, who will have minds of their own and will be able to speak them. We do not want automatons nor robots. There seems to be not the slightest danger that we are going to get many. Endless variations in environmental influences, which mold the little assortment of recognized variations in natural aptitudes, guarantee a definite individuality for everyone. •

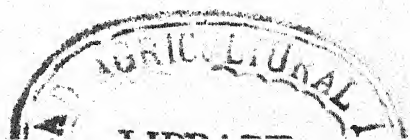
It will be a striking individuality if the individual acquires the *habit* of inhibiting his handicapping impulses and the *habit* of adding power to the tendencies that make for his enduring, personal satisfactions. Such habit training will assure a balance and self-control that will enable him—for himself—to steer this separate individuality of his happily through the world of reality.

A good rule is to avoid following any single method of psychology to extremes; behaviorism, psychoanalysis, or any other. Technically worded scientific statements of specialists in a certain theory—whose implications may be clear and have recognized value to those who have spent years in intensive study—tend to throw the subject out of focus for the average person. The resulting confusion leads some parents, educators, and nurses to unquestioning acceptance of any principle that is labeled as modern; and others to a wholesale, uncritical reaction in favor of anything old-fashioned.

We must keep our wits about us—never blindly apply old sayings, such as, “children should be seen and not heard,” nor blindly apply new sayings like “no repression.” The middle road nearly always is the best course. Our child-training should be directed by common sense, reinforced by the unconfusing, understandable principles all the substantial schools of modern psychology can offer. The preparation of living children for a full life is the goal to keep in view constantly.

I am modestly undertaking here to point out wise rules only for this life of actuality. Some of our more theoretical parents and educators seem to be suggesting that the inner self should be allowed to unfold itself, as if in a vacuum apart from our stubborn world—free from all

12909



restrictions. They shun insistence upon any standard of behavior as if they felt unable to decide better than a twelve-year-old child what conduct makes for happiness and what for misery on this earth.

They seem to regard the self as a self-contained, mystic birth-gift from the gods or inheritance. They speak sometimes as if this gift were delivered sealed in a package marked: "Not to be opened nor touched before adulthood. No exchanges nor alterations allowed."

To this extreme minority I am afraid my suggestions may seem overpractical, and perhaps even earthbound at times. I am sorry.

The everyday point for most of us is that no such insulated packages of self-hood are possible. The inner self that we reveal today has been inescapably shaped by what the outside world did to it yesterday—and years ago. It is forced to face, well or badly, what the world will do to it tomorrow—and years from now.

Our children are not shock troops we would like to risk in wars to expand rapidly the frontiers of custom. Nor are they laboratory animals shut away from normal events for experimental purposes. If the fathers and mothers who love them and the educators who are striving for their best interests have not the right to shape their personalities, who has? The artist who grinds out the comic-strip serial? He will do it to some extent, right or not. So may a colorful lad dashing up every day in the grocer's delivery car.

If you are constantly unhappy, constantly disillusioned, or constantly unable to attain your ambitions, look for basic faults that gained the upper hand in you before you were fifteen. You do not need to wander into psychologic

hinterlands in search of obscure possible causes with which to tinker. As an amateur (to whom the unfamiliar is likely to have the frightening fascination of "Ulalume"), it is better if you stay out of psychology's misty mid-region, away from its dank tarn of sex repression and ghoul haunted woodland of complexes, especially in half-informed discussions of the cocktail-party variety. You may injure yourself in that neighborhood, unless you have a competent personal guide.

Examine the definite, understandable reasons right before your eyes for your dissatisfaction with yourself and life. The reasons are there. They are the same reasons that will be trained into your children if you are not careful.

Everyone notices all around him the presence of too easy discouragement in certain persons, the presence of daydreaming, and the presence of many other universal faults and strengths. The casual observer does not give much thought to what *accounts* for the presence or absence of such qualities. Few who have not had it brought home to them in their own families can begin to realize the powerful effect any one commonplace trait allowed to get too far out of proportion can have in making or breaking a life.

I am speaking from experience with actual situations when I advise a devoted father against his playful custom of punching his little son so hard that the boy half-whimpers with pain while shouting with enjoyment. It is my business to know that this—like half-humiliating, half-enjoyable teasing—is an entirely wrong way to cultivate the rugged manliness the father seeks. I do not call up the ghost of von Sacher-Masoch and say that the boy is

headed for sexual abnormality. The training will be a handicap only to the degree to which he learns to get a sort of pleasure from welcoming excessive and unnecessary pain, humiliation, or trouble.

Suppose I tell a mother that there is danger in her daughter's noticeable tendency to quarrel with her playmates, who are invariably in the wrong. I do not imply that this will end in the extreme of suspicious antagonism against everything and everybody that, with other complications, appears in paranoid attitudes.

In our daily associations nearly all of us have come into contact with the two common tendencies I have used as illustrations. There are those who seem to go out of their way to get into painfully unpleasant situations that put them at a disadvantage. Practically every large group contains someone who is oversuspicious, inclined to quarrel about trivial matters, feeling all the time that he is the victim of some vague unfairness, and always in the right himself.

Everyone recognizes and, rightly, accepts frailties like those in friends and associates. How many recognize the first stirrings in their children? Certainly we should not *accept* the development of avoidable faults there.

No parent should slip into the assumption that he has not a thing to worry about. Adaptation to the complexities of the modern world is so exacting that every child runs into some maladjustment, even when it does not break out in serious personality difficulties. Not a grown person I know has entirely escaped the marks of stresses that came in this adaptive process.

Several years ago I studied the behavior of ten babies ranging from eighteen months to four years, all from

fortunately situated families. They were purposely selected at random in a nursery school that accepted no problem children. Not one was regarded as abnormal by the teachers, and I certainly would call all of them normal. Not one had ever been treated by a psychiatrist, and I do not infer that any of them will have to be. My whole point is that this was a really normal group; yet every single child in it had some little trait that—if not corrected—contained the possibility of psychologic trouble later.

I am not imagining danger where none exists. The head of the school—upon whose daily reports I relied—also believed that these characteristics were potentially dangerous. It is significant that most of them had escaped the notice of the parents, or had been considered too inconsequential to warrant an effort at correction. None was spectacular. They were only average shortcomings, I am sure, in a group of ten children.

For nearly a month one three-year-old wept unconsolably every morning when his parents left after bringing him to school. The average infant learns to face that natural disappointment calmly in less than a week. For two months the child would not play with any of the other children. The average child of three, destined to make many friends in later life, will play with other babies almost the minute he has a chance.

A girl of three was sick at her stomach whenever she became excited or was given food she did not like.

Another of the same age ran away from school every time she saw an opportunity.

A girl of four was far too interested in investigating sex with the other children, and tried to expose herself.

A boy of three had violent temper tantrums.

Another, three and a half, took home school supplies and could be forced to return them only with the greatest difficulty.

A boy of four showed active cruelty with his playmates when not constantly watched.

Difficulties of the three remaining members of the group were of the same order and importance.

Those children were not "black sheep." They were intelligent, interesting boys and girls of great promise. The parents had no reason to be unduly alarmed; nor passively submissive to a belief in inborn or constitutional flaws. Nor should they have rushed about in bewilderment because of their mistaken impressions of the more mysterious phases of psychology.

They should have been able to put a gentle but firm finger on every hindering offshoot of character as soon as it appeared; wisely repressing it, and *redirecting* the impulse behind it into the proven ways that lead to the children's fullest opportunities.

WILL THEY OUTGROW IT?

DON'T THESE childhood faults always come out in the wash?" I was asked by a mother who is intense, conscientious, and somewhat ineffectual.

I hear that question continually in various forms, and my answer is, "No."

They will not "come out in the wash"—except by happy chance; a chance no parent can afford to take. I doubt if all of them ever come out in that way.

A change of neighborhood, a new schoolteacher or playmate, and countless other shifts that happen without our planning them for our children's welfare may luckily conquer a harmful habit or tendency. Then again, there is about an equal chance that these accidental shifts will install harmful habits that did not exist before.

So far as it lies within our power, we owe it to our children to wash out harmful traits deliberately. Most of it lies within our power.

Definite moves to fade harmful patterns are only part of our task. We should plan carefully to substitute new, brighter, useful patterns for the ones we intentionally remove. We should drop all fettering notions that fate, in any of its forms, determines what sort of adults our children will be.

Through our constant trust to luck, I believe we miss our full psychologic possibilities today approximately as

far as men fell short of their full intellectual possibilities in the ages before there was general intellectual education. Many children, of course, happen to learn to get along well emotionally. We can think of men and women, some of them famous, who have picked up excellent intellectual educations too without schooling or intentional encouragement and direction; but without education the average man manages only to muddle along intellectually—as the average man now does emotionally.

Why not *plan* for our children to live? Why not train them in a way of life that we know will bring them rich returns?

We would be able to accomplish this far better if our own way were not so hazy. Most of us would deny off-hand that we have any regular way of life at all. Yet all of us have one, whether we know it or not. We are made up of a series of predictable qualities, including constantly repeated, habitual reactions to persons and situations. Our close friends know us by them, and can forecast fairly accurately how we will behave under certain conditions.

"I can see right now the temper he will be in when he hears we couldn't get the tickets," they remark.

"She will not stick at that hard job long," they say.

They speak of us as moody, generous, hasty, steady, easy-going, excitable; and nine times out of ten they are right. For most of us our way lacks organization in our own thinking, and is therefore devoid of intelligent control. Although we follow it continuously, we are oblivious to its trends.

Failing to understand ourselves, we allow our own complexities to store up complications for our children.

A father I know explains his unconcern about his young

daughter's exaggerated and increasing air of boredom by saying he does not want to dictate her personality. Yet he is shaping her personality every day. He praises women who have what he calls a "sophisticated nonchalance" and shows plainly that he is pleased when she is "nonchalant."

Although he does not realize it, he personally is attracted by indifference in women—physically attracted if we were to press the question far enough in his case. Few of the men to whom his daughter would like to be attractive later will share his enthusiasm for the type.

Here is a boy who has an ungovernable temper and spells of sulking. He is easily brought to healthy behavior and a happy outlook when a reasonable routine of activities and discipline is enforced. His mother is so irresponsible in everything she does and has so little perseverance that she immediately returns to her usual neglect of training for him when his conduct stops worrying her. Bad temper and sulking reappear. She does not blame her own psychologic confusion. She decides, comfortably, that the child has "a manic-depressive personality" and that nothing can prevent his slumps.

Intelligent guidance can be accomplished only when we fix upon definite hopes for our children's future and then establish ways of behavior to make our hopes come true.

I emphasize as positively as I can that ways of behavior must be *established*. I am convinced beyond doubt that the psychologic equipment with which we meet the world as adults is almost entirely the result of habit training between the day of birth and the dawn of adolescence. There is a temptation to overstate the case and say we are exclusively the result of childhood training, because I

am so sure that even an exaggeration will not suggest to the average parent, teacher, and nurse the full force of these early influences.

The idea is obviously not new, although it is relatively new to science. In the treatment of nervous and mental diseases, the building and tearing down of habits has been put in a central position by Adolf Meyer. In psychology, John Watson made the method famous in his radical behaviorism. Pavlov and his followers, and others, have conducted brilliantly convincing experiments.

I have had an opportunity to apply the principle of early training in actual practice with children. I know it will work. I have used it and seen it used successfully in hundreds of cases.

Recent scientific investigation supplies proof of psychologic truths apparent in human experience, which we formerly had to accept without proof. The truths themselves have been pointed out by understanding men through the centuries.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" is a straightforward statement from the ancient wisdom of the Proverbs.

Stevenson expressed a closely related idea, in an essay called "A Retrospect," exactly as our contemporary psychologist would, if he had Stevenson's facility with words:

"The future is nothing; but the past is myself, my own history, the seed of my present thoughts, the mold of my present disposition. It is not in vain that I return to the nothings of my childhood, for every part of them has left some stamp upon me, or put some fetter on my boasted free-will."

This is not to deny the effect of native endowment. Some children are born with intellectual and physical superiority and some are not. Chance combinations of individual talents or inaptitudes—including a great variety of such natural gifts as unusual co-ordination between hands and eyes, extraordinary strength, and exceptional imitative ability—decide the ease and success with which one child can be trained to be a sculptor (perhaps a genius) and others athletes or actors. These natural capacities and incapacities—and many more, like excellent memory, strong sex drive, great physical energy, or their opposites—are planted in bodily structure and hedged about it. They fence off the ultimate boundaries beyond which we cannot hope to push.

Great oaks do not from little prune pits grow. But a point I hope to drive home is that great oaks can come from little acorns that might produce badly stunted oak trees—less impressive than a well-nurtured prune.

It usually is not talent, but what we do with our native equipment that counts. This is personality in the full meaning of the term—the ability to translate knowledge and skills into commandable action. The “charming personality” of the “few-easy-lessons” literature and lecture courses—the fronts we present—are only a small part of personality in this accurate definition of how we feel about life, how we do things, and *what* we choose to do. The complete meaning of personality embraces a gamut of qualities ranging from work habits to habitual emotional attitudes.

Well-directed energy and a healthy frame of mind are greater influences in bringing us happiness than the knowl-

edge we possess or our quickness in learning. Some persons who are mines of erudition are chronically disheartened because they do not know how to dig in their mines, or how to distinguish between precious metals and slag.

The parents who admit that their children are not the brightest in the world should equip the children with substantial personalities, in our full meaning of the word.

It can be done. However binding the ultimate limits of physical and intellectual capacity may be, the limits to the development of personality traits are far less binding, if they exist. I am venturing to say "if they exist," because I have strong doubts whether any important part of personality is *inextricably* rooted in bodily structure.

I readily admit that there have been no experiments on human beings, except the simplest, to prove directly that even the most disastrous blights in personality are principally the result of training. We who have chosen human behavior as our work try to change people only when they show distressing faults. No one would make the final conclusive tests of deliberately turning happy human infants into abnormal, maladjusted, gloomy adults—as has been done conclusively by training in scientific experiments upon infants of lower animals.

It seems to me only common sense to assume that ability to change extremely bad behavior patterns of human babies into good ones is reason for believing that good patterns could be made into extremely bad ones. Of this I am positive; no parent who says a physically normal child is certain to continue normal, come what may, would permit daily training to start on his child at birth

intentionally designed to make the child abnormal in any way.

Even in cases about which there is frank disagreement among leading psychologists as to whether constitutional predisposition or unfortunate training alone is the original source of fault, the influence of training upon the development of the fault cannot be gainsaid.

One of my case histories supplies an illustration. Only daughters had been born to the girl's mother and father. Eager for a son, her mother chose to have another child after being warned that it might mean her death. When this child also was a girl the disappointment of the parents was so bitter that they began, with almost conscious intention, to make a boy of her.

None of the incidents of her earliest years indicated that she was different from normal girls; but with rather pitiful yearning her mother and father seized upon every trifling happening as evidence that she was going to be the boy of the family. Whenever girl's toys seemed to be unattractive, for instance (as they are at passing moments to every girl), they commented upon it approvingly. The mother decided when the child was two that she wanted short hair like a boy's. So short haircuts were ordered from then onward.

Her willfulness was in no sense regarded by the parents as caused by spoiling. They credited it to male impulse and virility. The child frequently was punished for the willfulness, but given a kind of praise at the same time. The parents mentioned in the presence of the "little fellow," as her mother actually called her, that some stubbornness was to be expected in such a tomboy.

Early warnings of a friend were listened to politely by the mother. Still she believed that somehow the girl would turn out well. Childhood pranks grew into youthful deception and ever-increasing willfulness. Boyishness in manner and dress became more marked. All were taken by the parents as signs of masculine inclinations, which they found not entirely displeasing.

In early adolescence, sex complexities began to be apparent, and the family friend gave more warnings. Yet no move was made to retrain the girl, except to send her to a boarding school when she was fourteen. She was expelled for surly, willful disobedience, and because her manner and dress aroused the relentless suspicions of her classmates. Her parents were really frightened, at last.

Wrong training from infancy, and the inexcusably late start toward correction, have made her problem extremely difficult, although I do not consider that this particular girl's masculinity and other maladjustments are so profoundly rooted and predominant that they cannot be corrected, ultimately.

Few parents would come as close as that mother and father did to cultivating this special fault deliberately; but many encourage too much masculinity in their daughters without knowing it. Many more are blind to the power of early training in less spectacular flaws, such as dishonesty—which also can spoil their children's prospects.

Human material is easy to shape at birth and through young childhood. It soon begins to set, and by the time puberty is reached the chance of all *basic* molding is gone. If I can control training until the twelfth year, I am confident of changing radically the behavior patterns and

personality of any child.* Between the twelfth and fifteenth years I am less confident of profound change. Beyond fifteen, I am sure that nothing really fundamental and revolutionary can be accomplished.

These statements, I hasten to say, should not be discouraging to adults. Maladjustments that demand impossibly heroic psychologic changes are comparatively infrequent—accounting, in the view of modern psychiatry, for persons of apparently normal brain and nervous structure who have nervous and mental diseases that are incurable by present psychiatric skill. Usually a relatively slight new direction of impulses, requiring no profound alteration in fundamental psychologic patterns, can make life satisfactory.

Early flexibility and comparatively rigid setting at puberty are seen plainly in the habit of language. A child can learn any language with the greatest ease. If he is taken to live in a foreign country when very young he can quickly acquire the speech of that country with no trace of his former accent. Every year of his approach to puberty makes the shift a little harder. And in a language learned after puberty, vestiges of foreign accent and cadence can be conquered only in the most uncommon cases and by the most painstaking effort.

What can be easily demonstrated with language is even

* That holds, within the strict boundaries of their very definite limitations, even for the physically or mentally handicapped. There are not so many children of actually deficient mentality as intelligence tests may lead us to believe—if carelessly applied. Although the tests are an unquestionably valuable aid to recognition and treatment of the slow-witted, overenthusiastic users may fail at times to see when psychologic training, rather than a sluggish brain, is responsible for a child's poor showing.

more true of habits with strong emotional overtones. The more emotion is connected with habits, the more quickly and rigidly they become fixed. This applies to the habit patterns of extreme fearfulness, quick anger, extreme selfishness, jealousy, self-pity, and all the other impulses we feel most deeply. These are the habits that play a predominant part in coloring our personalities and controlling our destinies.

"Never too old to learn" is truer in reverse. The further it is reversed, the truer it becomes. "Never too young to learn" is the idea parents and nurses always should bear in mind. The more a behavior pattern is affixed to the primary, simple, unconditioned responses, the easier it is to establish firmly. That is to say, the sooner habits (good or bad) are inculcated, the more force they will have, the longer they will endure, the harder they will be to change.

"Just as the *twig* is bent," Pope said, "the tree's inclin'd." This remark, with the one made by Robert Southwell in "Loss in Delay," "tender twigs are bent with ease" and "aged trees do break with bending," sums up the outstanding points in the story of man's emotional background. If we allow our children to become twisted too far and wait for the prevailing winds and recurring storms of the world to force them into line after they are fully grown and stiffened in their individual patterns, they may break. A multitude of men and women do.

To our great misfortune, it is precisely in the formative earliest years that parents, relatives, or nurses (who are nearly the whole world of an infant) are most likely to be directed purely by emotion in applying training. The baby's sweetness, its cute ways, its helplessness, its tearfulness, bring responses of love, pride, joy, and sympathy

that, by their very nature, are not intellectually controlled.

All of us who love babies feel the pull. Yet the bald fact remains that at the very time when adults should use the most sense in their contacts with a child, they use the least. They could cuddle him for hours to hear him crow with delight. They rejoice to see his tears dried by never-failing coos of pity over the first minor hurts of a long procession this world will force him to take. They learn what tricks will make him happy and "good." Over and over again they use those tricks, fixing the baby's habit to expect coddling that the world will not give him later.

This behavior by adults is not likely to be held to reasonable proportion unless they examine their impulses in the light of a thought-out plan, a plan to supply the baby with the best possible equipment for living. There is plenty of room for a sensible attitude toward children without cheating them of affection. Goodness knows I shall be among the first to call out a warning when I see any indication that babies are affection starved.

Real understanding, in addition to unthinking love, should be the birthright of all babies. They come to their parents as endearing little beings with only the simplest reactions. Upon these, and the other spontaneous reflexes that unfold in growth, experience writes the story of their lives. The first chapters lead unswervingly to the last. Babies will reach for the moon, until experience jots down that the moon is far away; and no matter how well they are born, they cannot reach the nearest goals in later life unless experience, through thoughtful training or the most accidental good chance, develops their native equipment adequately.

The inborn reflexes upon which you can start to build

your child's adult years and the final accounting of his life, are entirely undamaged at birth. They are not limited to the instinctive food-seeking reflex that causes the youngest infant to begin sucking the instant its lips first are touched. In addition to reflexes of spontaneous bodily movements and those of secretions and excretions, they include a definite group of spontaneous *emotional* responses that are present at birth in every baby.

Every parent should be familiar with this short list: (1) Release support from an infant, or subject it to loud noises, and without any previous experience of falls or noises its reactions show fear. (2) Tight restriction of movements causes a reflex of anger. (3) Pain or hunger arouses unhappiness. (4) Fondling and stroking bring forth reactions of active happiness, as distinguished from elemental satisfaction reactions to such creature comforts as food and warmth.

In that little list is the only burden of fear, anger, and unhappiness that is brought into the world. At first the entire range of possible happiness is encompassed in the narrow circle of petting.

There is a romantic possibility that only those prehistoric babies who had "in their blood" an early fear of noises, dread of falling, and hatred of being seized, gave forth screams that brought rescue from vicious prowlers or from slides toward the edges of cave-ledge cradles. They might thus have been the only infants who lived to pass down their heritage to the babies of today. That possibility, as well as the explanation of the inborn love of fondling as a rudimentary stirring of the sex drive that later causes women and men to become ancestors, remains in the realm of speculation. Our immediate concern is

that psychologic handicaps arise in the here and now from unfortunate early complications and reinforcement of these inborn reactions, however useful they may have been in some barbarous, far-distant past.

We know for a certainty that some of these reflexes, and some that appear later (in their untrained, natural form) in every normal child, will grow weaker with passing years. They tend to disappear entirely. The reflex for excessive fear of loud noises, for example, dims practically to the vanishing point very early. My personal observation suggests that the loss of this pattern is associated with learning to tell the direction from which noises come.

The natural fading of elemental, uncomplicated reflexes is the only scientific foundation for the light-hearted consolation, "Don't worry; the child will outgrow such foolishness."

True, troublesome behavior may be only a phase that will be cast off as basic reflexes behind it go into the discard; but before reflex patterns begin to fade naturally, they can be "unnaturally" reinforced. They can be strengthened so that they will persist all through life in complicated, far from elemental, forms.

The perfectly natural temper reflex stirred when a nurse pinions a baby too tightly under blankets brings a rush to the cribside, much petting, a special feeding. Those pleasant associations work for a repetition. Next night the approach of the nurse to the crib may cause screams, another rush, more petting, more feeding. It does not take such a strong suggestion to touch off a tantrum now. The number of associated suggestions that can do it tends constantly to increase. The arrival of bedtime may be enough, or the sight of an uncle who has tried ineffectively

to talk the boy out of rages. Every repetition strengthens the boy's behavior pattern. Angrily he rolls along.

If this training continues, temper will be flashing powerfully on the slightest provocation at the age of six. By this time it will bring a piece of candy, perhaps, and flattering pleas from father for a wink of sleep. Ten more years, and it will be embedded for life. Instead of a stick of candy it will bring frequent, harmful nervous tensions, lost friendship, and, sometimes, a straight right to the jaw.

With every infant's first wail of greeting, adjustment to the world begins. Before the physician has had time to hand it to its nurse or its parents, the first slight impressions upon its untrained reflexes have been made. From that instant adjustments continue.

They are accomplished by the reflexes developed in the higher, "thinking," centers of the brain; that is, the cortex, and cannot be established without the cortex (as the simpler untrained reflexes, such as gulping food, can be). These trained-in reflexes, too, become *automatic*, operate spontaneously and "thoughtlessly." They can swing an individual this way and that without his realizing why or how far he is being swung.

What psychologists call *the unconscious* seems to me to be only automatic reflexes, shoving and pulling below the surface of our awareness. There is a vast collection of them, *built up by training* on the relatively few elemental reactions with which we are born and the relatively few others that appear in us later in their simplest, untrained forms.

Human beings, as well as lower animals, who have once acquired automatic behavior patterns thoroughly, and then apparently forgotten them, can comparatively quickly

and "unconsciously" fall into the same habits again after they are older. Scientists, whose achievements depend on tireless accuracy that can take nothing for granted, have made elaborate tests to prove it.

To most laymen, the fact, even before research provided the needed proof, would appear self-evident. It would seem like the fact that a man of sixty who milked cows daily throughout boyhood and then did no milking for forty-five years could learn expert milking more easily than a man of sixty who had never touched a cow.

The accurately-timed series of movements in skillful milking are in large part so habitual and "unconscious" that this retrained milker could not describe every minute detail exactly and consecutively without going through the motions, so that he could study them.

If we watch ourselves in our daily lives, we can discover many surprising details of behavior that we repeat again and again without thinking. Often we can find whole series of movements, with their undertones of feeling, that follow one another in practically the same order whenever something starts them going.

A certain word or incident, let us say, will cause you to shrink back slightly. Next will come a narrowing of the eyes peculiar to you; next, your own distinctive sniff of vexation; and finally, the prolonged irritability you have the habit of showing when annoyed ever so little. The same word or situation may cause another man to lean forward with interest, and launch him into his own characteristic, restrained chuckle, which he nearly always caps with a burst of his good-natured laughter.

I was surprised as well as amused a few years ago to find that my mouth watered and my hands fumbled in my coat

pockets whenever I saw the glow of a red traffic light. Then I remembered that a stop light was a signal for a smoke while driving—and I do an unusual amount of city driving. Later I quit smoking. After several months of no reward when stop lights flashed, my mouth and hands gave up the hints.

To cite one of many pertinent experiments by scientists—Pavlov demonstrated that when dogs merely saw and heard an experimenter approach with a hypodermic syringe with which they had been given morphine they reacted with the same train of responses previously aroused in them by the morphine. First came restlessness, then profuse saliva, and then sleep; in that order every time.

If parents were more observant, they could detect their children acquiring habit routines that later can be started into motion by sights and sounds that might seem to have no connection. A glimpse of a bird cage, for instance, was all that was needed to set off the parade of fear actions in one baby who had been badly frightened by a fall while reaching from the edge of his bed for the cage of his formerly beloved canary. He had fallen when his mother was away. A brother, charged with watching him, did not confess the accident for several weeks. Until she learned of it, the mother was baffled as to the exact cause of the baby's strange outbursts; but that did not stop her from discouraging them.

On the whole, of course, it is lucky that so many of our activities can go through their paces without thought on our part. If training (accidental or otherwise) did not expand our meager store of primary reactions, we could not get along in any advanced civilization. This discipline

of adjustment makes for less emotional strain, not more. Not even a pet cat could enjoy a happy emotional life in a well-conducted house if he always acted purely instinctively.

Still we must never forget that *unfortunate* training creates reflexes that work just as automatically and powerfully as those created by fortunate training.

The throng of reflexes that is *developed* in our children can push them repeatedly into actions that their intelligence and conscience plead against. Ideas, ideals, and ambitions that we manage to make attractive to them in their wishful *thinking* but fail to provide for in their fundamental *habits* of action and feeling may dangle perpetually beyond reach. This lack of fundamental good habits is responsible for the plea from grown sons and daughters, "I try, mother, but I just can't."

It is so hard in settled maturity to achieve our hopes for ourselves without strongly established inner support, that for those who are unwilling to make a struggle to change themselves it amounts to, "I just can't." In the last analysis what anyone is willing to try, how long he will try, and how determinedly depend also to a large degree upon the stamina cultivated in him by his early training.

If we want to make absolutely sure that our children will not be included among the world's disappointed or utterly defeated persons, we must not leave their psychological education to luck. From the day we bend over their cradles we must follow a definite plan to build the automatic emotional attitudes and skills—the character and disposition—that are essential for their complete self-realization.

When we are, convinced that we can do so much, we

are confronted with the question of what kind of men and women our children would most enjoy being when they are grown. They will want to be happy, of course; but they will want more than that. Few of them can continue to be happy unless they feel that they are useful in some way. We must install the fundamental qualities that promote happiness and usefulness.

We must teach them to understand themselves by the time they reach manhood and womanhood. Otherwise, they will be open to a danger to which most of us are open now. They may lose their best friend or a good job, or miss their greatest opportunity through a flash of unthinking reaction from some buried habitual pattern that they do not realize is in them. Control or correction of such reactions is likely only if they learn—as most of us have not—to take good straight looks from time to time at the emotional, and frequently illogical, sources of impulses.

We should supply children with equipment that will make it possible for them to travel ultimately along paths of their own choice. To this choice I would apply guidance, influenced mainly by the children's special aptitudes and interests, which may not be my own. We should never allow our personal prejudices to discourage any enthusiasms or personality traits, or practice in any skills that may be useful. Without them, men and women are so restricted that they cannot truthfully be said to have a free choice either of the career or the personal course they will follow.

I believe firmly that life itself is full of substance. It holds forth the promise of enormous satisfactions. I have no patience with the pessimistic, sullen, ultrarealistic philosophy. I say frankly that above all I would rear children

who have zest for life; who will see the world as interesting, dramatic, and good; who will bring courage to life, courage to live fully and with some adventurousness; who will not be afraid to take reasonable risks for the chance of great personal satisfaction and usefulness.

The defeatist attitude has grown tremendously. We have largely abandoned the ideals of another day, and have not found new ones that satisfy us. As a generation, we are in need of a vital approach to life, a sense of personal responsibility, a philosophy of "courageous questing." We need what Stevenson called "that divine unrest, that old stinging trouble of humanity that makes all high achievements and all miserable failure, the same that spread wings with Icarus, the same that sent Columbus into the desolate Atlantic."

BAD HABITS LIVE ON DIVIDENDS

A CHILD NEVER clings to any habit, either in actions or in emotions, unless the habit brings a gratifying reward.

The child himself is nearly always unaware that he is fumbling for a reward for his bad behavior and getting it. His conduct is frequently harmful to him at the time, and may be even worse for his future; but the search for some reward always is there. When the behavior is robbed of the possibility of serving this purpose, the habit pattern begins to dim and soon drops out of use. It will regain force only when some kind of satisfaction is permitted to come again from a repetition of the behavior.

How long will a healthy baby hold to the habit of crying at night? Only as long as he "feels" that crying means being picked up, or being fed, or getting some other special attention. He "feels" it in the habits established by previous experience; he "feels it in his bones," as the old saying goes.

How long will a child continue to have tantrums? As long as he feels that a tantrum will produce a slice of cake, the achievement of some other desire, or the reversal of some unpleasant parental command.

How long will a child refuse to eat bread or any food he happens not to like? As long as he feels that there is a chance to get sweets or other foods he happens to like better.

I have asked those questions first because I take it for granted that my answers will be verified by the observation of all wise and experienced parents. Now let me ask some analogous ones, the answers to which may seem less obvious.

How long will a child remain fearful in the dark?

How long will he persist in being excessively shy of strangers?

How long will he continue to become too excited at parties?

How long will he be impudent or rude?

How long will he be disobedient?

The answers are still the same. The behavior patterns will be exercised and strengthened as long as they bring the child a satisfying return. Take away the dividends for the behavior, whether it is in the sphere of emotions or of outward conduct, and the pattern disappears.

If you are inclined to doubt it, remember the dividends can take various forms. Some of them will be as obscure to you as they are to the child himself, unless you look closely. Prolonged unhappiness or oversensitiveness, which seem to give a child only misery, may bring the strong accessory satisfactions of commanding the undivided attention and extra favors of an oversolicitous father. Being a tragic figure is next best to being heroic.

The building of habits goes on continuously even for activities we are accustomed to look upon as developing entirely from within the individual, with no encouragement toward success and no penalty on failure. Learning to talk is an illustration. The elemental, untrained reflexes that make possible the co-ordination of vocal-cord movements are among those that are not present at birth. They

unfold later; but the mere acquisition of this basic equipment does not provide a baby with speech. Before he can talk, these crude reflexes must be connected and elaborated through reflexes established by training.

No one is customarily aware of the complicated mechanism involved in the involuntary cry, "Look out!" to a companion about to step into the path of a rapidly approaching car. He does not stop to think how it happened that he uses words instead of a wordless shout, in what he probably would call this "instinctive" exclamation. Nor can he remember how he learned to make the particular series of muscular movements that form the two short words that spring "naturally" from his lips in colloquial English, instead of Chinese.

Spontaneous speech, normally appearing between the first and second years, is a habit acquired, like all other habits, through a process of trial and error, and imitation of associates. It is built up by a series of rewards and penalties. The rewards may be only the approval of others and quicker fulfillment of personal desires. The penalties for failure may be only delay in the fulfillment of desires and the annoyance of sister or brother because it takes so long to find out what the baby wants.

The natural law that definite, automatic reflexes for habits are built up by rewards and torn down by denial of rewards provides those who are training children with one of their greatest opportunities. If your child has distressing characteristics, be rigidly honest in deciding whether you are not doing things, or at least permitting things to happen, that encourage bad behavior. You will find you are. Stop it. When your healthy baby pouts, whines, and cries over nothing take a firm grip on your

sympathetic impulses. Do not go near him. Make undramatic failure the inevitable penalty for bad habits.

The child should be noticed after he is good. Our inclination is to neglect encouragement when he has spent happy hours in valuable, self-initiated activities that have not caused a minute's bother; just as our inclination is to let troublesome actions cast a bad baby in the rewarding role of hero in a big scene.

Long-run satisfactions should be provided as a premium for virtues actually demonstrated for a reasonably long period. This is the opposite of the system in many households. Bribes are held forth, in advance, on a promise to do some little thing right; as if doing the right thing for a short while were something extraordinary and as if talking were as good as doing.

Life does not say wheedlingly, "I promise you right now, darling, that if you are good until dinner time, I'll let you go to the circus tomorrow." Life has few petted darlings. We learn only from experience that if we are good enough, long enough, we have an excellent chance of getting to the circus sooner or later, or of realizing our other ambitions.

Life is slow pay sometimes, but it is fairly sure pay. It pays on performance, not talk, and pays according to its own rules. Maybe we would like to see some of the rules different, but there they are; we have to follow them, either efficiently and happily or sullenly and ineffectually. Childhood is the time to build strength and skill that will be as close to "second nature" as a football star's swift movements are by the time the stern referees of major events take rule enforcement out of the control of fond parents.

Mothers and fathers have a chance to show imagination



and ingenuity in devising ways to associate long-run satisfactions directly with genuine accomplishment. How dull the usual haphazard methods seem when compared to the game invented by the parents in the following story. Vacation guests in this home noticed that when the father arrived for dinner the vivacious three-year-old daughter went to him at once and requested a ticket.

"What does mother think, Judie?" the father asked. "By all means," the mother announced. "She has been very good all day."

The father ceremoniously presented the girl a square torn from an old postcard, and she ran to her room to put it away. The interested guests learned that one of her greatest pleasures was animated conversation with her parents in their bedroom in the morning. The parents decided she should get the most from it if they gave up a half-hour's sleep that they valued highly, since the father works late as managing editor of a morning newspaper. Thus the ticket game.

Tickets are honored promptly at the bedroom door at the specified hour. Good girl; *experience* shows a ticket will come at the *close* of the day. Bad girl; no ticket. Careless girl who did not put her ticket in the little drawer arranged neatly for it; too bad, probably lost ticket. No tickets nor promises of tickets in advance. No ticket—no admittance.

One of the best things about the training of this girl is that her parents seem to know when she really is good and when she is bad. That is surprising. The average parents do not know the difference, as evaluated in the only sensible terms of what is best and what is worst for their children's future. Decisions usually are swayed by

what parents personally find annoying or pleasing at the moment. The accidental breaking of mother's favorite vase may bring severe punishment. An intentional shot with an air rifle at the friendly dog of a neighbor boy whom mother does not like, taxes her self-control to hide the smile that lurks behind her mild rebuke.

The emotions of parents are too much involved to permit them to emphasize all the points they should. It is a truism that the answer to the remark, "If that were my child, he would be different," is, "If that were your child you would be just as easy-going with him as his mother."

I have tried the experiment of referring a specific question asked by a parent in a lecture audience to the other parents present. Usually they quickly and eagerly gave suggestions that hit close to the center of the problem. Yet within the next few minutes these other parents would be posing worried queries about their own children that could be answered just as easily by anyone with a detached attitude.

If we could only free ourselves enough from emotional bias to decide what is best for our children in all fundamental issues as if they were not ours at all, our chances of being proud to claim them as our very own would be increased enormously. We should be wise and upright judges of every tendency that we see gaining a foothold, and we should keep on looking closely and fairly.

I realize all this is not so easy as it sounds. I have undertaken the training of far more troublesome children in my time than you will ever encounter, if you are lucky or careful in your training from the outset. No one needs to tell me that mistreated children have a way of being at their worst at the precise moment in which it is most difficult

to control them. The night when the president of the company has come for his first dinner at your home may well be the very one your child selects for the most exasperating spell of insolence he ever had.

In the back of the child's mind is the notion that he can get anything he wants when guests are present. Such a domestic crisis has to be faced in some way. It is too late then to find a pleasant way out. The more pleasant way was offered and overlooked long before the president of the company came to dinner.

Where did the child get the idea he could do anything he pleased when discipline was hard to enforce? Search into the past and you will see. Extensive observation has shown me that parents who invariably cannot control their children on special occasions never really control them at any time.

Parents may reply that bad characteristics appear suddenly in a previously well-behaved child, and that there is nothing they can do to stop them. I agree sympathetically with the first part of the statement. Training for bad behavior, as well as good, will be implanted when we cannot possibly know it. I disagree positively, however, with the assertion that there is nothing we can do about it. The fact that we cannot control the world is the more reason why we should control our children.

The time to start doing something is the instant an undesirable trait begins to peep out. If we make it fail to bring a satisfying return the first time it appears, we are well on our way. If we allow it to pay dividends several times, it is well on its way to a permanent place in the child's portfolio. Grant dividends for twelve years, and he will continue to hold to the behavior—even after payments

on it are stopped by an unfeeling world and assessments come regularly instead. It will be much harder to persuade him to part from this conduct than it is to get grandmother to dispose of the bankrupt stocks that were good for a few years just after grandfather bought them. The child's unreasoned *feeling* for his behavior is more deeply rooted in earliest, fundamental habit-patterns than grandmother's feeling about her stocks.

Harmful behavior should *never* be allowed to pay, when we can stop the payment. Behavior that builds character that will serve the child's future interests should *always* be made to bring satisfaction, insofar as we can arrange it.

Consistency in our own attitudes is essential if we expect to obtain consistent advancement. Yet orders from mothers and fathers often are so conflicting that confusion is inevitable in the children's feeling of what is right and what is wrong. When one parent says "No," the other says "Yes." Frequently a doting relative, nursemaid, or servant is ready to slip in disapproving looks when a child is being rebuked, and later an apple or a nickel for candy.

Far from being able to reach an agreement with others, many a parent cannot even agree with himself from one day to the next. A bad report card may bring a spurt of severity in which commands to the offending son or daughter come so thick and fast, and are so far beyond a child's capacity, that a paragon of brilliance and good conduct could not follow them with seven-league boots. The next day a change for the better in the parent's personal affairs, or perhaps a shamefaced realization of the over-strictness of the day before, results in a complete reversal. All bars are down and there is a show of humoring that implies that the whole thing was a mistake.

If the fathers of America suddenly became as vacillating in their performance in business as a majority of them and their wives are in bringing up their children, within the next six months the rolls of the unemployable would swell to a size that would make the staunchest heart in Washington flutter.

After a child has been allowed to run wild for two weeks because his mother considers the visit of his cousin a special occasion when there should not be the slightest restriction, the mother can hardly expect that everything that has been learned in the fourteen days will be forgotten in an hour after the cousin has left.

Those who are negligent about training can nearly always find a ready excuse. "One of the other children is ill," or "father is tired and hates scenes." Some dimly envisioned day in the future will be the best one to start the work, they think, not today. They keep saying:

"It's so natural for little boys to be boisterous." (Most frequently in a room filled with grown persons where it in-sures attention.)

"She's just a tiny baby." (In whose pliant and, as yet, unspoiled character, habits of a life-time are digging grooves.)

"He will be a child only once; do not burden him now: life will be hard enough when the time comes." (It will be hard indeed for the man whose first fifteen formative years drill into his habitual responses the unreasoned feeling that his lightest wish is like the word of Wotan.)

It is not necessary to go to any trouble to find opportunities for training. There are many every day in the life of every child. A quiet remark at the right moment is worth an hour's ill-timed harangue. Issues should not

be made where none exist, but those that do arise should be dealt with promptly. They should never be avoided, and should be kept as simple as possible—so simple that a child can understand them.

Keeping issues simple is itself far from simple at times. In one small bundle of humanity, expelled from a birthday party, may arrive on your surprised doorstep an over-excited child, a black eye, a torn shirt, self-pity, obvious craving for motherly support in naughtiness, perhaps an excessive sense of humiliation and defeat; the entire bundle dripping salty tears and spicy fibs about what happened.

The wise solution may be emphasized by recalling an awkward Latin translation popular in campus magazine exchange columns in my college days: "She took the little boy apart and talked to him." The mother should begin by separating the boy's problems and meeting them one by one.

She should calm him, and the biggest help will be keeping calm herself. She should make it perfectly clear that unrestrained tears, self-pity, lies, and bids for motherly backing in misconduct will bring no returns from her. When the story is coming straight and ringing true (and any mother who is at all critical and unprejudiced can tell when it is), the dignified, sympathetic hearing a manly recital deserves will help with the exaggerated feeling of humiliation and defeat.

Final judgment should rest on the facts disclosed, but real understanding of motives and their almost inevitable consequences in real life should be the foundation of the mother's technique.

"You have a black eye," she might point out kindly; "and

the shirt you liked so well is torn. So you threw the ice cream because you wanted to be as big as the other boy. That isn't the way to be big, you see."

Perhaps the denial of rewards and a mention of the world's penalties may be enough to prevent a repetition of misbehavior; but in my zeal to call attention sharply to the most essential basic principles, I must not give the impression that in *every* case this will be all that is necessary. It will be sufficient in nearly all situations, for parents who start training in infancy and do their best. It would be adequate in *all* situations for such alert and intelligent parents *if* the parents had the patience and the time to wait for the passive influence of "no reward" to win a starvation seige against habits already strongly intrenched, and *if* mothers and fathers could control the diversions and satisfactions the world smuggles in, as an experimenter can control the world of laboratory rats.

The truth is that most parents have not the patience; none of them can afford the delay in which intrenched bad habits may dig their trenches deeper; and none of them can establish a blockade complete enough to keep every bit of nourishment from the traits against which they are at war.

Harmful habitual attitudes and behavior sometimes have gone far before they are noticed. Every setting sun finds them stronger, and we cannot make either the sun or the environment stand still.

A girl or boy may rather quickly acquire a strong tendency to lie; perhaps from a nurse or teacher with whom the device succeeds, perhaps from one of any number of possible sources. Wherever the child gets it, once the habit is firmly established the parents can hardly ar-

range a single day in which the child will not be able to get some satisfaction out of following it. If they make chronic lying fail to bring any return one time when they have a chance to observe it, and it still succeeds nine times when they do not know about it, the odds in this extreme case are strongly against the usually sufficient "no reward" method. Generally the problem is complicated further by the fact that other bad habits also are clamoring for attention at the same time.

When things come to such a pass, and noncoercive inducements toward a change for the better have been tried and found too slow to meet the situation, we should be ready to apply the other rule that life itself uses in habit training. Denial of rewards should be reinforced by rapid, strong, negative inhibitions in the form of definite penalties for failure.

SPANK—IF YOU MUST

PUNISHMENT! I brace myself. I realize that ample supplies of the label "Reactionary!"—as emphatic as a Scarlet Letter—are ready to be fastened upon anyone who dares to find the least wisdom in nearly all mankind's past experience in this field.

I can sense the indignation in the more theoretical groups of conscientious modern mothers at the mere mention of physical punishment. Still it was a term not altogether foreign to some well-loved old-fashioned women. Their photographs can be found on busy desks under the grateful gaze of alertly-modern sons—sons with undimmed individuality, a sensibly-directed aggression, and general fitness that have promoted outstanding creative success and lasting zest for living.

I am young enough and reckless enough to brave the risks. When making a serious attempt to give helpful advice to those who are guiding children, it seems inexcusable to evade or gloss over any question as obtrusive as this one is today, merely to escape the possibility of a misunderstanding. For that matter, Puck's donkey head was awarded to Nick Bottom, the Weaver, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* after the vow Nick made in his eagerness not to "fright the ladies" into believing he was a lion: "I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove."

I am sure the debate over the advisability of any form

of physical punishment, under any conditions, is a real issue in this era that tends to dodge even the rock-bottom minimum of discipline. I know positively that an exaggerated idea of the difficulties involved is troubling American parents unnecessarily. Literally hundreds of times I have been asked in worried tones, "Do you believe in spanking?" When the question has come up at lectures—as it always does sooner or later if there is an open discussion—I have noticed that an appreciable number of the sincerely-striving parents in the audience fidgeted as if the very idea caused them anxiety.

Let me answer categorically first, so that the essential point will be made beyond any doubt.

"Yes, I believe in spanking."

Now please mark well the following qualifications of that categorical statement:

For a really well-trained child, spanking should rarely, if ever, be necessary. Satisfactions have not been allowed to come in the past from behavior against which parents fix their disapproval, so the parents' disapproval alone has gained force enough to discourage bad behavior.

Even in cases in which punishment becomes necessary, I believe that other forms usually are better than spanking.

No physical punishment should ever be used until the admittedly slower, but ultimately sure, plan of denying rewards has failed to cope with the problem.

I should not attempt whipping a big boy or girl.

For younger children, I certainly should be sparing of the palm and little switch. Under no circumstances should I use anything that could properly be called a "rod."

•

Equally certainly, I should not spoil the child. If conduct or emotional attitudes that have every chance of contributing to unhappiness, headstrong spinelessness, and unfitness for life have become so set that they cannot be eliminated by milder means, I most assuredly would use spanking on a young child afflicted by these blocking handicaps. I should whisk the child unceremoniously away from observers to administer the punishment. All the plays he might be tempted to make for the sympathy of an audience by coming back weeping or grinning braggingly would be stopped. I should make the punishment sting enough to be a wholesome lesson, but should strictly avoid severe pain or arousal of extreme fear.

An *even-tempered*, moderate paddling along these lines will snuff dangerous habits at the outset, when they can be snuffed comparatively easily. It is much kinder than waiting for the unmerciful beatings of the adult world against habitual attitudes and behavior so deeply embedded that they never can be eliminated completely, no matter what misery the world's beatings cause.

This is only another plea for a realistic rather than a sentimental or overtheoretical approach to our problems. We have to use methods that are *workable* in a rapidly shifting environment, partly beyond our control. A premium is placed on speed, not only by the strengthening of bad habits that are allowed to run on but also by the progressive lessening of basic malleability in children.

Parents and educators would not rely *altogether* on soothing, slow schemes if they could only be brought to a full understanding of how habits are built—and to a full understanding of the force of habits in automatically shap-

ing characteristic behavior and the characteristic emotional attitudes behind it.


In all education and training—even when we do not recognize the fact—we must depend a great deal upon the reinforcement in the child of the inner urges that approve and disapprove his own thoughts and actions. This equipment helps to make an individual an independent, original, self-initiating personality. It enables the personality, in a sense, to reward and punish itself emotionally for what it “feels” are successes and what it “feels” are failures.

I suggest that self-rewards and self-punishments are the real function of emotions and mood swings, accounting for the fitness of mood swings to survive in the human race in its centuries of struggle. Some elation over accomplishment and some self-condemnation over failures make an individual stronger, although these useful functions may be twisted out of the normal by wrong emphasis and converted into positive harms.

It is well to keep reminding ourselves that the inner urges should not be looked upon as glowing spiritual lamps in a secret shrine of the personality too sacred to be entered even by a mother or father. When we find ourselves slipping back into that romantic view of insulated personality traits, a modicum of realistic thinking will show us that individual characteristics are not inviolate. If we watch carefully we can see the careless hands of chance pushing them this way and that.

These traits are sure to be trained, one way or another, whether we do anything about it or not. It is our responsibility to guide the process, fortifying desirable tenden-

•



cies, and thwarting undesirable ones, so that at fifteen our charges will have a self-determination and rugged individuality that will promote—not hamper—their chances for continuously satisfying living.

Do not believe that punishment for children when calm evaluation of their best interests shows clearly that the occasion demands it can be brushed aside as an old fogey notion. Although it was as old as the hills when Mark Twain immortalized unrepressed American boyhood in *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, scientific support for the time-proved method on this mooted point is still new.

Whenever there is an admitted difference of worthy opinions on tenuous theories it seems to me advisable to put the theories to the conclusive test of actual trial in real life. Our conclusions should be based on a comparison of results. The immediately practical benefits of punishment when necessary, and the absence of ill effects upon adults who received it in moderation in childhood, can be verified in nearly every community.

"Of course everyone knows you can force an outward show of good behavior by punishment or alarming threats of it," the more enthusiastic no-repressionists will say. "You are doing it at the expense of serious harm to the personality."

My reply is that when care is used to punish moderately, justly, and only for tendencies that will be a personal handicap, the total personality is not harmed, but greatly improved. The final result we are seeking is a fully developed individual who can carry on for himself; who has mastered the rules of the game so thoroughly that he does not become tangled by them; who has dependable self-confidence because every difficulty has not been avoided

or smoothed for him and every self-centered inclination has not been gratified. I have no anxiety over such an individual's originality.

Every possible device the circumstances demand—including punishment—should be employed to bend infants and children into a personally useful control and proportioning of emotions and an adjustment to their environment. This will give them true freedom later to realize themselves, instead of dooming them to spend their energy struggling against deeply rooted drags. Spanking or nettling small legs with appropriately small switches are only two of the methods that may be used.

A slap on the hand of the infant who is reaching for a forbidden object has the advantages of immediate and direct association with the misbehavior and of being quickly over. To do any good the slap must be sharp enough to be felt, but should not be severely painful. It goes almost without saying that a child's ears or face should never be boxed.

I have found that prompt isolation to a closed room is highly effective. It is to be recommended before any kind of physical punishment is resorted to because of its entire freedom from even mild pain and its total lack of dramatics. The absence of dramatics is important because a considerable part of children's "badness"—especially in the presence of an audience—is motivated by a desire to attract attention at any cost.

Instantly upon disobedience to the first suggestion that the misbehavior stop, a child can be marched out so rapidly that he has no time to enjoy a struggle or be tragic. He can be shut in his room with only the brief and forceful remark that he can return when he is ready to behave

himself. Wails and pleadings should be ignored. Complete disappearance of temper and self-pity and the arrival of definite evidence of willingness to behave should be awaited. This plan, properly employed, practically always succeeds. Its failures can be traced in nearly every instance to attention from grown persons through the closed door; or to such short isolation that the child is not impressed, fifteen minutes, say, when an hour or more may be needed.

A fundamental in all discipline is to be *sure* you are right, then go ahead. Go ahead in a way that leaves no shadow of doubt whether you or your child wins. Whatever you do, do something decisive. Do not tell a child who coasts down a dangerous and forbidden driveway that he cannot use his coaster any more that day and then let him coax you into giving it back in five minutes. Do not spank a child and cuddle his tears away, murmuring: "Daddy is sorry he had to spank you."

After any discipline is over, receive the child in your good graces again with all reasonable affection and respect. Treat the discipline as a finished and fair penalty for wrong conduct, a closed incident—closed with you in unquestioned control.

Above all, never punish a child when you are angry. It can be put down flatly that when you punish in anger you are wrong ninety-nine times out of a hundred, which means that parents are wrong more than half the time when they chastise. This wrong punishment, in turn, is partly responsible for the present unwise reaction against all punishment in a generation in which the inclination is to seek excuses for laxity. The efforts of parents to free themselves from emotional bias should be especially in-

tense in the use of physical punishment, because of the difficulty of keeping it unemotional. To be effective, it must be deliberate; administered with impersonal, calm control.

Anger leads to injustice, defeating the very purpose of discipline by providing a basis for resentment. It frequently ends with parents in a violent temper that causes an overseverity that terrifies the punished child. The anger of the child clashes against the anger of the parent, building toward a climax of emotional tenseness and tending to establish habitual anger responses.

This temptation to overseverity is one of the reasons why I would never spank a big boy or girl. I do not know anyone who can be counted upon implicitly to keep a quiet impersonal temper in a prolonged, indecisive tussle with a youngster too husky to be handled easily. Another objection, particularly with a big girl, is that spanking may cause too great and too personal humiliation. That should be ruled out of every penalty. It excludes also such schemes as making a recalcitrant seventh-grader spend a day in kindergarten.

It should be clear that although I object to infantilizing measures for those far beyond infancy I am not squeamish in urging strict discipline for big boys and girls when they need it. In fact, if a child develops bad tendencies, the older he is the stronger the discipline required. The test is simply, "What can be done with necessary deliberateness, impersonality, and with a sureness that will guarantee winning the issue decisively?"

With an older boy or girl who has been moderately well trained, it generally will be enough to deny privileges; being sure they are privileges which are much enjoyed,

seeing to it that the denial is for a period long enough to make a real impression, and that the sentence sticks. For more extreme misbehavior that fails to respond to such attempts, more extreme methods are clearly demanded. As an indication of the ultimate possibilities in such infrequent and unusually serious instances, I cite the case of a girl of twelve who was brought me by her justifiably terrified grandparents because of her long-continued, defiant, and insolent refusal to accept any authority.

She had been sent to the grandparents in a belated effort at rescue after being cast adrift in the wake of her parents' divorce. For years she had been swimming through the cross-currents with nothing to cling to except, occasionally, the shifting sands of the pseudo-sophisticated set around her mother and father in separate parts of Europe. Throughout the period she had been shunted from one private school to another on the Continent, selected always for blasé smartness rather than educational worth. Her grandfather, one of the finest men I ever knew, was in distress over his inability to overcome her brazenly-announced determination to do exactly as she pleased.

What she might please to do was indicated by an openly expressed interest in men. Another tendency, most shocking of all to the grandparents, was revealed by a suggestion she had made to a Negro maid who was preparing her bath.

Now a noticeably developed sex interest is not infrequent in girls and boys at twelve, and parents who see obvious signs then—or earlier—should not blink the facts. In a separate chapter detailed plans will be discussed for healthy development and necessary redirection of this energy.

The evidence in this girl's case indicated that her inclinations toward sex deviations were deliberately exaggerated—in her talk. Moderate restriction was represented for the moment by her grandparents, and she was spitefully flaunting the intentions that she knew would convey to them the greatest possible contempt for their code.

This defiance of all rules appeared to me to be the underlying aspect of her trouble, which was the greatest menace to her future happiness. I emphasize that the recommended discipline was aimed directly at this fundamental. I was confident that once her stubborn willfulness was out of the way this particular girl's other inclinations could be counted on to keep her from carrying through the unquestionably dangerous threats the willfulness led her to make.

The grandfather wondered if whipping would do any good. I advised him strongly against it. It would have been a harmfully personal affront to this sex-conscious girl. And a man of his age and stature could not quickly win a physical struggle with a child as strong as she was, if he could win at all.

In our first talk I tried to establish a basis of understanding and confidence. Her final response was the sullen firm statement, "More than anything else, I hate 'decent' girls, and I never intend to be one."

"We shall not argue that," I said, "because you are too young to know what you are talking about. You cannot realize yet how surely your ideas lead straight to misery for you. We are going to *force* you to act and talk decently, whatever you think about it. We will take a chance on thanks later."

I then proposed wrapping and pinning the child in a

sheet and several layers of blankets, drawn and pinned with large safety pins so tightly that she could not move a hand. A strict, kind, graduate nurse, experienced in handling difficult children, was installed in the grandparents' home. Her instructions were to do her best by all possible milder means—but to be ready to wrap the girl hand and foot at the first open rebellion, getting the servants to help if that was necessary to make the operation swift, painless, and conclusive.

This sheet-and-blanket wrapping was considered very reluctantly by the grandfather, although his reluctance was hidden from the girl. Why the proposal was more distasteful to him than the severe whippings he suggested, I cannot see. Many nervous patients who find it impossible to control themselves ask voluntarily to be wrapped in this way after they once have experienced the sedative effect.

A high-tempered, strong, and obstinate child can be immobilized quickly, its arms and legs pinioned, without the least danger of injury and with a minimum of anger-arousing conflict. The indignity is impersonal, and certainly not infantile. When a child is left lying alone, unable to struggle or to dramatize its obstinance, its temper will cool and repentance will set in surprisingly soon.

With this frankly extreme method, as with all other forms of discipline, success hinges upon willingness to carry straight through to a finish anything that is begun. If this willingness is evident enough, the punishment itself may be avoided. In the case of the girl just described, the convincing announcement of our determination to match her radically bad behavior with a comparably radi-

cal punishment was enough to start a turn at once. With her we never had to inflict the immobilization.

For those who are interested in knowing this "bad girl's" subsequent course, I insert parenthetically that her conduct and general emotional attitude have been exemplary for years. She is happy, has excellent prospects, and is devoted to her grandfather. She recently called at my office; a cultured and gracious young woman.

"As I remember it," she remarked in the course of our pleasant talk, "you once took a chance on later thanks for all concerned at a time I now realize was rather critical for me. I have thanked my grandfather a good many times. I came here today to thank you."

Some modern parents and child guiders probably will be disturbed by my neglect of lengthy reasoning with that girl at the age of twelve. In the first place, it had been tried in vain before I saw her. If it had not been, I assert with no apology that, after my opening attempts to establish an understanding had failed, I would have considered arguments of decidedly minor consequences.

In dealing with a long-continued and strongly developed behavior pattern, complete reliance upon a discourse seems to me like using a garden sprinkler to extinguish a two-alarm fire. Talking a child out of a violent temper tantrum, for example, is about as sensible as trying to allay hunger with an oration. Immobilization in blankets will calm him; spanking will only increase the excitement of an angry child.

Even to the extent to which grown persons are capable of completely detached and logical reasoning, it should be apparent that the brightest child of twelve years or less is

too immature to reason out all the complicated moral and social issues he will face when he is grown. Maturity should mean the grooving of emotions, impulses, and thinking into the channels that lead to satisfactory lives. Our task is to point to the paths to which our longer experience and observation show our children should become accustomed.

When we undertake guidance, we should point in a way that will make directions clear. We should not leave the impression of mumblings from a well-meaning and affectionate person, too sentimental and muddled to tell plainly which turns the records of men have proved are best on the whole.

Words, if continually used as part of a strong combination of influences, do attain power. In the last analysis the most potent part of the combination is not the words. To say the thing quite simply, advice and exhortation by parents against firmly set bad habits are effective in just that measure to which children know the parents mean business and have meant business in the past. If a parent always means business, the words will always be effective.

In many cases of parental talk there never has been any action, and probably never will be. This talk is not part of a strong combination of influences, what a psychologist would call a "compound stimulus." It is a parent-sung solo without any sustaining accompaniment. Catlike whines, and cries of "No!" "No!" "No!" break into it from the audience for whose benefit it is composed, to whom it is personally dedicated, and for whose ears the sad and silly refrain is plaintively repeated daily in all its variations.

In a present-day book of specific rules for the develop-

ment and guidance of children, it is difficult to limit the space allotted to penalties to the proportion that negative discipline should have. The topic stirs an interest now that is beyond all proportion to its importance in relation to the problem of child guidance as a whole. Comparatively few discussions readily available to the general public supply light in a high enough ratio to the heat they generate. It must be evident to those not already committed exclusively to the iron-rule or to the no-rule-at-all extremes that I am advising the middle road. Penalties and punishment will come to be of first importance only to those parents who have earlier neglected the first principles of their gentler, noncoercive opportunities.

Children are bound to their parents by affection and authority, and authority boils down ultimately to some kind of discipline. The affection ties are much more binding than those of authority. The two are by no means opposed. I have yet to see a child whose affection was impaired by just, untemperish punishment. Obvious facts refute the finer-spun notions about childish resentment.

Well-reared children do not resent justice. They do resent *injustice* and overseverity. With no trace of malice or intimidation, children often make such statements as, "Mother spanked me this morning because I stamped my foot and said I wouldn't come when she called." Just the other day a boy who is a close friend of mine tossed his head, smiled with unabashed vexation at himself, and said:

"I'm such a dumb-bell. I knew I'd have to stay after school if I was late again; and what did I do but poke in late!"

Such complete and rapid passing of antagonism and such freedom from humiliation are typical. I have seen innumerable examples of strong and enduring love for justly strict parents. In striking contrast stand the innumerable instances of flaunting *lack* of affection and respect for parents who are coddling and lax.

GOOD COMPANIONS, INCLUDING PARENTS

MOTHERS AND fathers are naturally the idols of young children. If the image is disclosed as tawdry after the passing years make girls and boys more critical, it is the fault of the mothers and fathers.

Parental example is probably the greatest single factor in training. What you yourself do is of greater influence than anything you can say, especially if your actions belie your words. Your children will inevitably desire to be like you and to act like you. The pull is far stronger than the mere conscious desire alone. The imitative impulse, appearing about the time a child learns to talk, acts both intentionally and unconsciously as a highly developed, automatic, reinforcement in the copying of mothers' and fathers' habitual conduct and emotional attitudes.

In an incident reported to me, a lad of three and a half knocked repeatedly at the door while his mother was telephoning and could not conveniently stop to admit him. When the mother, who consistently maintains a serene cheerfulness with him, finally opened the door she smiled and said, "I'm sorry I couldn't come sooner, but I was busy." He immediately responded with a smile—that is what he is used to—but announced, "I wanted to be mad."

Not a flicker on the pleasant face he saw before him betrayed that his statement had been heard. There was

nothing to stir up his smouldering annoyance, nothing against which he could react unpleasantly. Those things simply do not fit into any of his relations with his mother. No good times are spoiled for him, and he is learning to accept necessary disappointments without crippling depression or rage.

Companionship with parents is highly prized by practically every girl and boy. Interests and activities can be shaped and directed by a wise use of it. Often the prize is sought in vain. At first every boy would rather play games or go on jaunts with his father than with the boys on the corner. Usually the father cannot be bothered. Parents like to talk about how much they enjoy being with their children. Their actions justify a suspicion that they are bored by brief and feeble attempts at genuine companionship.

Most fathers and mothers—especially fathers—do not devote many hours enthusiastically to their daughters and sons after the first novelty of babyhood is past. They listen to the troubles of middle childhood when they have to, and occasionally come swooping off their perches for sudden reprimands. By the time children are old enough to be really interesting as companions to the average parent, it is too late. The children have been forced to establish other interests, pleasures, and affection relations.

The household is likely to be too much regulated for the convenience of its older members. Boys and girls may feel excluded from the closest intimacy of its circle, and often they are to a large extent, even in the modern family that is prone to be overindulgent in many ways. The social contacts and interests of adults unavoidably rule out participation on most occasions. Companionship is sure to be

neglected for that reason unless an intentional effort is put forth to provide it in the comparatively limited periods when no interferences prevent. Most parents fail to make the effort.

Nearly all normal children will seek companionship as surely as a thirsty animal seeks water. There is something to be corrected in those who do not. They should be pushed out into contacts with others immediately and continuously.

A well-selected group of playmates will give your little son and daughter ample chance to develop their friendliness, leadership, alertness and inventiveness, and will not spoil them in the process. There will be some in the group who will shout, "Oh, come on," to the chronic pull-back. It is that much better if a *normally confident* child's circle contains juvenile representatives of stern realities in about the proportion in which grown-up realists will be encountered in the world. There should be, and there usually is, some forthright youngster who is ready to remind a lad who becomes impractically overassertive that he is not Babe Ruth, after all, even if he has a new bat and a baseball cap.

The good habits (as well as bad habits) of companions will be imitated with surprising speed and ease. This is a powerful part of environment over which some measure of control can be exercised in the critical preschool years. Deciding upon earliest associates is more basic than an effort to make contacts with "the right people" later. When we are trying to encourage the companionships that are best for our children, let us hope that we are more influenced by the emotional and intellectual stability of the playmates than by their families' social standing. We

should not deny our child a wholesome friend because of a comparatively minor fault amid many more important good qualities. Bad grammar is contagious, of course. So is dishonesty, which is a much more stubborn and serious disease than dangling participles. If our influence upon our children's selection of companions is used well in early childhood—and as far as possible in adolescence—the later choices of companions should come nearer to taking care of themselves.

Example, an invariable check upon satisfaction and success in misbehavior, and fair penalties for deliberate violations are sure to bear harvest if used in intelligent combination. The most important ferment in the combination is perseverance. Days may come when the weed-seeds of bad habits seem to be sprouting too rapidly and too rankly to be brought under any control. If so, we must remember that the seeds of good example and good training are equally hardy. No one can tell exactly when they have fallen into fertile, unchoked soil, and when they will unexpectedly grow.

Training efforts upon a child who is slow in responding should be redoubled and sustained without cessation. We are tempted to give up or become naggingly peevish and spasmodic just when the child needs our help most urgently.

There once was a boy of three—grown now to a neatness that repudiates the stubborn inclination he had then toward an excess of carelessness inexcusable even in a young and active lad. His mother said to him patiently but sternly three times a day, every single day for more than a year, "You cannot sit down at the table until you wash your face and hands."

At last, quite suddenly, "came the revolution." He arrived for dinner clean and neat—voluntarily! His volition from then on has been firmly set on cleanliness, as it formerly was on dirtiness.

Direct, constructive training must never stop if it is to pit itself with assurance against the training given by chance, which never stops. Romans, as well as Rome, were not built in a day.



*ULTRAMODERN EDUCATION, MOVIES,
RADIO, AND OTHER EXCITEMENTS*

IN MY office a few weeks ago sat a clever, pretty young woman with a general manner and a pattern of talk as assuredly in the fashion as were her clothes.

"My trouble," she said, "is that I don't get any kick out of anything any more."

How often psychiatrists hear that! Frequently—as with this young woman, whose emotional difficulties proved to be comparatively slight—the statement is not true at all, just a slick nickel worn thin in the conversational slot machines. Still, the fact that she and so many others hit upon this particular avowal has a significance aside from its accuracy or inaccuracy as a description of their psychologic states. A remark could not gain the currency that this one has without reflecting a widespread point of view.

To the old notion that the world owes us a living has been added the new one that the world owes us a "kick." Not a dependable future of sustained interest, necessarily, but only a "hand-out" of excitement that will carry us through this one day to the next, in which we hope to have the luck to pick up another sandwich of "thrill" somewhere.

"Amuse me!"—we might almost say, "Amaze me!"—is the never-ending demand. The gifted Edna St. Vincent

Millay could have been formulating a creed for a large part of her epoch when she wrote one of her most widely quoted poems:

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—
It gives a lovely light!*

We grant Miss Millay her poetic license, of course, and do not stress unduly the mundane observation that a candle burning at both ends, despite passing flashes, actually gives a sputtering, messy light, usually stewing in its own grease. We know well enough that she was referring to the momentary spurts of redoubled brightness and we sense the poetic effectiveness of her image; but as we let the graceful words, "It will not last the night," roll trippingly on our tongues, it is sensible to remember that this is poetry. Waking in stark reality in the darkness before some cold gray dawn after the last candle has burned out will not be a pleasant experience. It can be especially tragic for one who is not trained to summon courage to move when his footsteps are not gilded with artificial radiance.

I am not moralizing, nor preaching, nor "viewing with alarm." It is not my business to do any of those things. Whatever my personal feelings are about the rightness or wrongness of any code, as a physician I am concerned with philosophical or moral ideals only in their relation to health. I am speaking only as a physician when I murmur my conviction that an unhealthy emphasis in training

* From "A Few Figs from Thistles," published by Harper & Brothers. Copyright, 1922, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

for excitement hunting is being passed on to children now by an older generation that has an exaggerated craving for it.

Amusement and even amazement certainly have their legitimate place in adding spice to life. They have been sought to some extent by all men in all eras; but rarely before our day have they been prized so highly, and never before could they be found so easily that any child's natural craving for them may readily become a positive addiction. Thrills, empty laughter, and synthetic tears are being poured over millions of impressionable boys and girls every day and night by movies, radio, and ubiquitous publications.

Through these same great freely running streams, the praiseworthy product of inventive genius and enterprise, flows a wealth of educational and cultural influences. If you have given much thought to the time your child spends on making the most of the educational and cultural advantages in proportion to his hours devoted to the passing excitement chase that these devices also offer somewhat disproportionately, you are an exceptional parent.

For an amount within the reach of the average American family's purse-strings your children—at least as often as they should just sit back to be *passively* entertained—can see motion pictures that are not stupid and an occasional one that is worthy of the attention of the most intelligent person. Do they see those productions? Or do they see exclusively the ones that provide chills, twisted, tinsel values, or a diet restricted entirely to that staple commodity of the showmen known to the trade as the "belly laugh"?

The motion-picture makers can tell you exactly which

films attracted you and your children in droves. They find out because they plan to produce more along those lines. Some mothers' associations and parent-teacher groups are bothering to study and recommend certain pictures. If you do not learn anything about what your child sees after you speak your familiar line, "Yes, you may go to the movies," can you reasonably expect Hollywood to worry more than you do over what may or may not be for his permanent good?

Through your radio, your boy and girl frequently are offered, free, symphonies that a young Beethoven might have trudged miles to hear and dramas that would have inspired the boy William Shakespeare. In fact the young Beethoven grew up to compose some of those symphonies and that boy Shakespeare later wrote some of those dramas.

You may shout loudly enough to be heard above the babble of your favorite jazz program that you wish there were still more of these worthwhile broadcasts; but whose fault is it, in the final analysis, if your youngsters hear none of the fine things that are flying through the air now? Whose fault is it if they sit instead, in popeyed attention hour after hour, soaking themselves so thoroughly in banality?

The little device attached to every radio receiver enabling you to turn it off by a flip of the wrist is one of the most powerful direct voting machines ever contrived by man. Under the American advertising-sponsored broadcasting system, if parents in great numbers would so much as turn a hand to vote "No," the gory monster in the radio serial would quickly, though undramatically, die a death as final as any that could be imagined by resourceful con-

tinuity writers to transfix a juvenile audience with shivers of horror.

Should the grandson of a pioneer who rarely had the privilege of reading a newspaper or magazine bemoan the fact that the news stands and mail trains now creak under a load of printed matter that costs a trifle? Certainly not. Yet we might expect this pioneer's grandson—enjoying the convenience of a richly developed country of which his hard-working ancestor dreamed—to use some care in selecting from the great number of available publications the ones he gives his children to read.

Since such a large part of the control rests with us, shoving all the blame onto the mass entertainment and information agencies for supplying what is most urgently demanded is too easy a way for us to absolve ourselves of responsibility for modern children's excitement training. It is in the use to which we allow our children to put these remarkable agencies, and in the proportion of time we permit to go to second-hand thrills instead of active personal accomplishment, that the ultimate trouble lies.

This trouble, I believe, can be traced to the fact that in everything—from sanctioning a completely unrestricted run of the enticing array of current amusements to the deliberate planning of the more extreme types of ultra-progressive education—we are noticeably influenced by the notion that the best thing for anyone to do is exactly what he *wants* to do. Every waking minute should be packed with "interest" for our children, we tend to believe.

Now there is much to be said from a psychologic standpoint for the general principle of building education upon interest. I approve heartily the ideal behind modern teaching's method of learning by doing. I applaud enthu-

siastically the revolt it has led against the old regime of dreary, uninspired effort, dunce caps, and "readin', and 'ritin', and 'rithmetic, taught to the tune of a hickory stick." The great increase in the proportion of pupils who really like to go to school today is a strong recommendation for the newer methods.

I am aware also that "learning by doing" leads in a direction directly opposite from the implied theory of "learning by doing nothing" held out by the mass production of "canned" entertainments. Even at their best, *inactive* entertainments should not be permitted to put too much stopping, looking, and listening into the place that should be occupied by creative, personal activity. The quality that progressive education and "canned" entertainment have in common, at their worst, is the confusion of genuine, lasting interest with temporary excitement.

This confusion that is muddling the *ultraprogressive* groups whom I singled out for comment has brought some undeserved discredit to the entire fraternity of intelligently progressive educators. As it affects the field of formal education itself that is the problem of those who are devoting themselves to the cause of better teaching. It becomes our affair in child guidance because the radical interpretation of basically sound doctrines has led the more extremely modern schoolteachers to harmful training of children. The glorification of this misdirection with the accolade of unquestionably earnest persons who are supposed to be enlightened authorities not only is overinfluencing many of our more conservative schools but also encourages parents and nurses to apply the same bad training at home.

In some advanced classrooms held up to us as ideal by the propagandists, nothing that would be recognized as teaching by a reasonably conservative educator is tolerated. The wise and helpful concept that activities should spring from the initiative of the pupils is magnified into a fetish. Practically any conceivable class occupation is all right—just so long as some bubbling child proposes it out of his own “immediate interests” without a suggestion from the teacher.

The plan works something like this: When class is opened, the teacher signifies that the entire little community can hardly wait to hear what has happened to her young friends since last they met. One lad bursts out with the news that he stepped on a crab and that it pinched his foot.* So Johnny stepped on a crab! My gracious! The class is alive with excitement.

“Let’s talk about crabs!” says Mary.

Fine! Crabs it shall be!

Henry exclaims that he once saw a whole basket of crabs at the market. He guesses maybe there were a hundred in the basket; anyway fifty. That is arithmetic—Henry knows that a hundred is more than fifty. Some of the others will pick up that useful fact; honestly they will, even in this highly-charged atmosphere. (A limited

* I am substituting this crab for another live animal whose encounter with a pupil started a closely similar round of activities described in the prospectus of a progressive school—a good school, on the whole, I should say. In pointing out specific faults that seem to me directly related to the central problem of child training, I desire to avoid naming names or making any criticism that can be readily recognized as applying, personally, to those whom I am sure I should like personally and who may be doing good work as evaluated in the strictly intellectual results that are outside my field.

amount of actual practice in multiplication, division, and subtraction is somewhat apologetically resorted to on the side.) Edith, politely waiting until a fleeting instant when no one else is talking ("self-control and social give-and-take"), makes known that she feels an urge to do a picture of a crab on the board. Here drawing enters happily, you observe.

Within a few days the class has progressed from crabs to fish and fishermen. A fishing boat is made of boxes, and a name is painted on it by a volunteer (writing). Weeks later, if inclinations run that way, the eager students may end—via whales and whaling and thence through the distantly related subject of big game hunting—with the production of a drama.

The play is written and produced by volunteer pupils, and they paint their own scenery. The plot may feature a game warden in a national forest who protects a father, mother, and child bear from a villain who tries to shoot them. Or it may feature anything that pops into the pupils' heads.

Why must the teacher shun suggesting what might seem to her mature judgment a more profitable subject than crabs? Because, according to the ultraprogressives, this would not have the immediacy of interest excited in Johnny by his adventure and in some of his classmates by the thought that they, personally, may have shaken the hand that so recently shook the hand of a crab from a foot that they know. "Growth from within" is the goal, and in all fairness it is a worthy goal.

Couldn't the teacher bring out of her presumably richer experience some topic beside this purely accidental one

that might come as close to fostering a growth from within the quiet little fellow looking out the window? For that matter, couldn't the teacher's proposal do as much for the inner growth of the whole class, which even now is becoming excited about the experience of a single individual at second hand?

Well, conceivably; but such an intrusion by the teacher would not be extremely "progressive" education. It would smack of a "formalized course," "conformity to a pre-conceived pattern," and "regimentation."

Worst of all, it would be "adult dictation," which is the black beast of the most advanced educators, and of countless numbers of parents and nurses today.

The psychologic dangers that lurk in a procedure that can scamper in any direction with the agility of one of our more lively multiple-legged crustaceans shine out as obviously as its virtues when we take a critical look at the method.

Its greatest psychologic virtue, aside from the purely pedagogical merits it may or may not have, upon which I am not presuming to judge, seems to me to be that it does stimulate children to think of learning as something they desire to acquire because they see that they need it in a living world. In that respect, learning by willing doing is far superior to the opposite extreme of forcing an unnecessarily tedious drill in dry, isolated facts. But why go to either extreme?

The newer plan also places a premium upon creative thinking and upon initiative in looking to more than one source for information—which have their uses, provided playful personal observation of fascinating facts is not

confused, as it often is, with sound "research." Recognition of the distinct individualities of all the various pupils in the new schools is likewise good. Those who learn rapidly can go ahead rapidly, and if the little fellow who was uninspired by the crab furore just described continues to look silently out of the window every day, he soon will be recognized and given special attention as an "exceptional" pupil.

That means "exceptionally" dull, of course. Nevertheless it is a euphemism that indicates hopefulness. It guards against an unwarranted stigma of inferiority that excuses teachers from trying to improve the slower pupils, and acts as a warning against psychologically harmful attempts at driving beyond capacity.

Part of the reaction against predetermined courses is justified by recent scientific evidence that the ability of the average child to learn certain things at certain ages is far different from what adults used to believe. The findings in this field indicate that we should check our plans for instruction against experimentally observed performance of typical children, as progressive teaching tends to do. We can fall into the error of demanding too much in one particular and too little in another.

When we find so many good things, what is there left to be wrong with ultramodern education? A grave basic danger to the personalities of our sons and daughters in the scheme, as I see it, is that it is so likely to submerge rugged character development. Long-run values face the risk of being belittled by a failure to distinguish between the excitement of today and the enduring interests of tomorrow. On this point the influence of the radicals ap-

pears to me to be breaking through most noticeably into our schools. The attack hits a weak spot in our defenses because the doctrine of the desirability of self-control has been a little outmoded on every front by our yearning for "no repression."

"The prevailing philosophy of education tends to discredit hard work," Abraham Flexner has remarked.

We are afflicted with an abject dread of any routine whatever and with a deep aversion to any "external" authority. We shut our eyes to the hard facts of the everyday world while inculcating in children the belief that the smallest restriction upon any passing inner urge sears the soul and outrages all the rights of an "absolutely free" individuality. Nothing must be allowed to interfere with a child's precious train of thought.

Here we are, back again to the sentimentalization of personality as an untouched and untouchable birth gift from inheritance. This belief seems to be applied—at least by implication—with an almost mystical zeal at times by ultramodern educators. Yet these self-styled realistic moderns are amused by the mystical zeal with which Froebel, the great pioneer of kindergartens, attributed a symbolic significance to children's playful contact with dots, sticks, and rings; progressing to the circle representing "essential unity," all supposed by ardent Froebelites to blossom in juvenile minds into an understanding of the profound truths of life.

The far-reaching influence of the many constructive ideas of Froebel is not dimmed when we say his cult went too far there; and I intend no sweeping condemnation of ultramodern education in its entirety when I quote

the following statements from esthetically sound articles on creative art work by two modern teachers * as examples of the half-mystical, half-worshipful attitude toward individuality to which I am referring.

"Believing that the great reservoir of human creativeness is inexhaustible," the first teacher writes, "we religiously withdrew from the child, so that he might discover himself in his work and also, incidentally, that we might discover him. . . . We maintained that idling was better than copying and reproducing. . . . The child's early drawing of the spiral and circle is his first art expression. The spiral and circle reveal the homogeneous, spiritual at-oneness of his stage of development. Every object made from an inner impulse, no matter how insignificant or useless it may appear, is a creation, and bears the hallmark of the creator upon it. . . .

"An unhampered child is always self-active and creative. He is absorbed in his own interests and is therefore reluctant to receive suggestion or direction from the outside. . . . Outside suggestion or direction only serves to interrupt and retard the work of the self-active child."

"Creation is a process like life itself," asserts the second teacher. "It rises out of a state of quiet, a sacred spot where the miracle is born. Out of the dark, the unconscious, a spring wells forth, and like a stream cutting its own bed through the meadow, it flows. After this process a detachment sets in and the artist views, judges, and develops according to his taste and maturity. In the young child or a great genius, a state of unity may exist and the

* "Creative Expression," edited for the Progressive Education Association by Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, published by E. M. Hale and Company, Milwaukee.

two processes occur at the same time. Because of this simple unity in the young child painting is play for him and he is better off with almost no teaching."

Now we should be unjust to our own comprehension and to the teachers possessed of those visions—undoubtedly better than those possessed of no vision at all—if we said we had no glimmer of what they were talking about; but, despite our sympathy, I believe most of us will agree that they are venturing into hazardous obscurities.

What will this shying from all external standards of good and bad—apparent in the presentation of every other subject by ultramodern education almost as noticeably as in its art work—do to equip a child to face a world where fairly rigid standards exist?

Is the child who is left to do exactly what he pleases being really original, or merely copying after all? Will the "unhampered child" always be fortunate enough to encounter in adulthood only those who will bow down at the altar of this new religion of his sacred self-activeness and creativeness? Will he still find these worshipers, even if what he turns out when he feels an inner urge against idleness continues to be more "insignificant" and "useless" than run-of-the-mill productions by his contemporaries?

Can he always continue to avoid all routine? Will he gain satisfaction as a man if he can find no niche because he cannot tolerate any discipline? Is a reasonable amount of routine, provided he has some training, an obstacle or a positive aid in attaining his *own* inner feeling of self-realization, entirely aside from the measurement by external standards?

In the group of modern educators themselves, there are leaders who are helping to answer those questions for us,

now that the first fine frenzy of the innovation is passing. They are emphasizing that there must be *some* external standards, even some routine. Hughes Mearns, for example, clarifies the problem by an inspiring article contributed to "Creative Expression," a good symposium edited for the Progressive Education Association by Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker.

Mr. Mearns qualifies with critical intelligence his effective plea for a day when we can truly say that "all God's chillun" are permitted to use their wings. He states that because he wrote a book on the poetry of youth he constantly receives sheaves of *bad* poetry from all parts of the country. It is done by children, the accompanying letters proudly proclaim, "without any instruction whatever!"

"My pity goes out to the children," Mr. Mearns writes; "so obviously have they needed someone to be by to point out the way. Not to tell them what to say! Heaven and Poesy forbid! But they should never have been allowed, I say as I read, to continue to write in the style of yesteryear, and even in the style of the year before yesteryear; and their copyings, their hackneyed phrasing, and their silly platitudes should have been gently made known to them—an art of teaching required here that is nothing but the highest."

In other words, Mr. Mearns, sanely seeking all possible originality and self-realization, apparently takes reality into consideration. He evidently recognizes that the immediate, spontaneous interest of a child is not the product of a sacred individuality existing in a vacuum. It is the outcropping, the copying, of past experience—readings, movies, radio, comic strips—largely left to chance in most

homes. The same clear appraisal seems to be shown by some other progressive educators. Mr. Mearns speaks well for this more moderate faction in his other comments in the article from which I have just quoted. This one is typical:

"One group of 'progressives,' for instance, believes so much in the 'growth theory' that it will hardly permit any instruction at all. It banks upon Nature. With these 'naturalists' some of us have delightful disputes. Nature is wonderful, as all the poets tell us, but we, some of us, don't trust her altogether. She is a powerful Djinn to summon, and also a lusty, sly wench."

The best way to evaluate the need of standards, routine, and discipline is by looking at them in the light of a realistic psychology. All of us like to say that we enjoy doing things only when we have a definite goal in view or when the actions have variety; but much of our daily activity reflects the satisfaction we get from practically automatic repetition of movements that we can perform easily.

When I hear people declare that all routine is stultifying, I am reminded of a friend of mine who worked for many years where he felt the constant repetition of uninspiring tasks was smothering his spirit. At last an opportunity came for a broader, more exciting life. He told everyone goodbye and received congratulations with pleasure. At the door he turned to smile a last farewell to the desk to which he had been "chained" so long, and suddenly there was a foolish lump in his throat.

He tells me that he has mentioned his surprise at his experience to friends who also had left routine jobs with the same organization and had been successful in the

larger field he entered. Without exception, they said they felt the same way the day they left.

That story, which I believe fairly represents the reactions of most of us, is not a plea for the continuation of unrewarding routine. Nor does it indicate that the repetition of a familiar round should be allowed to reach the point where it dulls the zest and courage for new ventures. Quite the contrary. As a matter of fact the skills acquired under the routine and the discipline of the organization from which those men were graduated—nationally known in its field as a place where men "*had* to be good"—was what enabled them to free their imaginations on the broader horizon. That is one of the best things about automatic skills.

Another fine thing is that the mere repetition of things we do well provides a lasting satisfaction in itself. Thorstein Veblen called it the "instinct of workmanship."

Watch a child closely and you can observe for yourself that routine is not the psychologic hobgoblin it is popularly supposed to be. Mixed with the child's constant scattering of energy and search for novelty, you will see also its entirely voluntary repetition of the same gestures and the same words. This repetition will continue, voluntarily, all through life.

I suggest that evidence points to the conclusion that the impulses to a *scattering* of energy are inborn. On the other hand, the facts seem to me to indicate that the reflexes that make possible the lasting satisfactions that flow from the repetition of patterns long enough to gain real skill do not make their appearance until later. The "instinct of workmanship" is not, strictly speaking, an "in-

stinct," but represents the co-ordination and reinforcement by training of a group of reflexes that unfold in growth.

Scattering of interests will develop markedly, all too soon, without training. But no child will develop to a useful height the long-run personal satisfactions resulting from the repetition of a technique that is being mastered; and no child will know the ultimate rewards of carrying undertakings through to a distant goal, unless his rudimentary impulses to formulated endeavor—appearing after scattering is well under way—are trained by some routine and discipline. Need we remind parents that the training can be either intelligently directed, or left to luck?

The ideal equipment, as I see it, is a blend of the novelty drive, which aids the "creative drive," and the feeling for routine patterns in which we are attaining ease and skill.

All of our schools that have been overinfluenced by the radical progressives into superstitious reverence for *immediate* interest tend to give a positive training in scattering. They drill this scattering into boys and girls through their very fear of any sort of drill. This goes on in childhood, the time when there is the greatest need for training in centering and co-ordination, along with the release of the creative powers.

I readily agree that no learning is entirely wasted and that there is a "carry over" of skills from one situation to another; but certain "tool" skills, like ability to read, are more useful than others, which may be picked up by a Jack-of-all-trades. True, we can start with any imaginable topic and by wandering on through various related ones can arrive at last at any imaginable point. This procedure would seem to me to be wasteful of the teaching time re-

quired to reach a specific objective; and I am sure it is permanently wasteful of pupils' energies to the extent that it establishes the habitual bent toward wandering.

What the "newest" teachers seem often to forget in practice, if not in theory, is that their students' precious train of thought has no long-run driving power, no schedule, and no definite destination. It frequently jumps the track and breaks itself to bits when the throttle is entrusted to children, taught that true creativeness is to "want what they want when they want it."

The unadorned truth is that young children—and older children and adults who are untrained—do not know what they want from one minute to the next. No wonder, with teachers trying to meet every youngster's suggestion as to what he would like most at the moment, we find a scramble—playing "Crusaders on the March," making "gadgets," playing "street car," to the exclusion of study—that reminds us of the Mock Turtle's schooling:

"'I only took the regular course,' said the Mock Turtle. 'What was that?' inquired Alice. 'Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with,' the Mock Turtle replied; 'and then the different branches of Arithmetic—Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.'"

It is in the distraction which goes with the "reeling and writhing" that I see psychologic harm. I am convinced that any individual can acquire the habit of not looking toward distant, real achievement, measuring up to a good standard, by having everything glossed over and made too exciting for him all through his youth. I fear also that even when the goal is vaguely recognized, the graduates of these extreme schools will not have the stamina to reach it if it happens to be hard to reach.

On "uglification" those in the vanguard of the ultra-progressive movement have reversed the Mock Turtle's course. They prettify everything beyond all semblance to the less attractive phases of commonplace actuality.

Ambition they foster though, to their credit be it said. A typical fourth-year class may take up the timely riddle, "Whither mankind?" Their instructors don't really expect the little boys and girls to arrive at a final solution that will end the nightmare of our elder statesmen. Eagerness to attempt anything while a spirit of enthusiasm lasts, not the utility of the product, is one of the golden needles in the haystack. This is a prize worth striving for, but I wonder if an ambition nourished on overstimulation and cushioned against all distasteful effort will stand the blows of later life.

The cry of alarmists that the new schools implant derision of all existing standards seems to me unfounded. What the more brashly unrestrained graduates whom the fully-liberated courses may turn out will do to the world is not so much a cause for anxiety as what the world may do to them.

A frequent rereading of John Dewey's *Interest and Effort in Education*—one of the classics of the progressive approach—would be helpful to propagandists for this educational playhouse. While pointing out that effort is significant not as *bare* effort or strain, and that a normal person demands a certain amount of difficulty to have a full and vivid sense of what he is about and a lively interest in what he is doing, Dr. Dewey states:

"What we are after is persistency, consecutiveness of activity; endurance against obstacles and through hindrances."

The fine virtues of progressive education we can have

by a common sense application of the progressive theory, without the faults introduced by extremists. We can obtain real interest, and still keep sight of the end. The end should remain the acquisition of skills in an orderly, usable fashion, and the acquisition of stamina to use them. That is true personality development, true freeing of the individuality.

If the teacher of a sensibly formalized course, based on known aptitudes, used the remarkable enthusiasm and resourcefulness that are employed by many ultramodern teachers (and by some "old-fashioned" ones), the subjects would be cloaked with all the interest necessary. It would be a *lasting* interest, too, not a thin excitement chase that may leave its devotee moaning at the age of 20 that life hasn't any "kick."

The teacher must not be afraid to plot a course, to intrude a suggestion, and to remain in control, to the extent that the world will plot a course, make suggestions and remain in control later. We do not need to foreswear any pressure whatever in our rightful abhorrence of *harmful* pressure. All teaching means guidance, and guidance necessarily means pressure—gentle or harsh, wise or unwise. There is point to Shedd's epigram, "Self-education is fine when the pupil is a born educator."

A sizeable amount of routine; yes, even a moderate allotment of the drill so much deplored today, must be used if we desire adults equipped to enjoy the glow of mastery. It is not an unfair suppression of the spirit for an employer of a grown man to expect him to know that 6 times 6 is 36 or to be able to complete an *assigned* task well and quickly. The imposition of external standards like those will not shrivel the employee's soul in the least—if he happens to know the answer and has acquired fair efficiency.

The crux of the matter is this: it is eminently desirable to reinstate some of the lost emphasis upon the old ideal of doing what we *should* do, while clinging to the best part of the new ideal of doing what we want to do. The best part of the new ideal is realized when we build *enduring* satisfactions by distinguishing carefully between long-run wants and the deceptively thrilling wants of the moment.

Although parents and nurses usually shirk their responsibilities in connection with the school problem, their responsibilities are there. They can aid the school-teachers, nearly all of whom are trying hard and sanely to advance well-rounded modern education. One aid would be early training in the habitual attitude that no reward can be counted upon without effort.

We can stop bundling our children to classes with a sigh of relief, expecting the teachers to make men and women of them without the least assistance from the home. We can see that our children's minds are not cluttered with an addiction to machine-made amusement and excitement, and that they are supplied with activities and interests at home that will provide a foundation for individuality to be cultivated in class. In all those ways, fathers, mothers and nurses can do much toward *fitting* their boys and girls to be educated in living.

Finally, if our children go to college, we can encourage them to go with something beside snobbish interests and fun in view. We can teach them not to expect that from prolonged, undisciplined idleness education will somehow filter in by osmosis, merely through anatomic contact with stadium seats, dance floors, and sorority house easy chairs. No matter how advanced we become, intellectual learning must continue to be absorbed largely through the head.

—AND NO WORK MAKES
JACK DULLER

THE MOST serious unemployment problem in the United States today is that practically every child in the country is out of work. The unemployment of their elders may be solved in time, but the chance for the youngsters becomes steadily worse instead of better.

Just when it seems the bottom has been reached, more labor-saving devices, or another sweeping increase in effortless amusement possibilities add to their misfortunes. Only luck can pull through the ones whose parents do not arrange for them to get enough to do to hold body and soul together in the critical years under twelve, when aimless idleness is most likely to leave permanent scars. Luckily, luck often does come to the rescue of the sons and daughters of the privileged classes. If it did not, the outlook would be dark indeed.

All these advances in the standard of living that play havoc with the direction of youthful energy have other obviously valuable compensations. We would not think of doing without them, or of trying to prevent them. They offer counterbalancing benefits even to children; benefits of which only a fraction usually are collected.

I am not conventionally lyric over the "dear dead days of yore" nor the "school of hard knocks." Surely every advantage of leisure should be seized for the oncoming

generations. Just as surely every disadvantage should be offset. Rightly utilized, leisure and easy amusement devices are broadening; but when children show unmistakable signs of being flattened by the heaviness of their free hours, we should supply a program of controlled activities with a creative purpose.

We have been bombarded lately with literature and orations on unemployment, the inalienable right to work, the duty of work; on lack of skills, and lack of all desire for honest effort, in their economic, political, and sociological aspects. I am considering them here from an entirely different standpoint, as a physician interested in what is good medicine in training.

In that field no other positive and specific aim can be placed ahead of the development of work habits. It takes a leading place because the personal satisfaction in achievement and the world's rewards for achievement rank in the forefront of any that human beings can experience. More than this, the possession of work habits provides a solid and enduring core around which the personality can be built and to which it can cling through thick and thin.

We should be characteristically accustomed to set ourselves tasks and carry them through to completion without being diverted too much by extraneous influences and desires.

We should be able to allot ourselves enough tasks to fill a creditable day, and able to keep at them automatically, to a reasonable degree, without strain and with no strong emotion except a feeling of satisfaction.

Our personalities should be so organized that only a simple stimulation is required to set us going in productive endeavor.

Those abilities are as important as any we can have instilled in us. Without a passing grade in them no one—with the very doubtful exception of erratic geniuses who are too rare to affect the point—can expect to reach fullest constructive success, either as measured in terms of prestige or in an inner sense of secure, individual well-being.

The joys of acclaim and the other remunerations of the ability to produce, much worth while as they are, fall into second place in our discussion, after the direct effect of productive ability on personality itself.

As applied to the entire outlook on life, the absence or presence of the faculty of keeping creatively busy and seeing things through means all the difference between what Bliss Carman contrasted as "The faltering, restless hand of Hack, and the tireless hand of Hew." A spasmodic "hacker" in a department that occupies as important a place as work does in life is fairly sure to be unstable in other vital things.

One such person is a youth of nineteen years who was brought to me because of troublesome conduct for which lack of organized work habits is more responsible, in my opinion, than anything else. He is the only son of a nervous father and an emotional, indirect mother. From the time he was a baby the entire family revolved around what he wanted. He was indulged almost beyond belief and indulged in ways destructive to the direction and control of his energy.

Learning to use a knife, fork and spoon, for example, can begin about as early as any "work" can for a child. It is hard work at two years. This boy was not taught to feed himself until he was six years old. His mother usually did the feeding, and read him stories at the same time.

She said it was because he had a strong tendency to eat too little, although pictures taken of him at that age showed he was far too fat.

In his boyhood absolutely no duties were assigned to him for the sake of training, in his home full of servants. Natural brightness enabled him to coast through elementary schooling without half trying. He reached adolescence with no urge toward any creative effort. Immediate pleasure was his only lure to activity. So he could only speed up his pleasure seeking and make it more fantastic. Lying and the forging of his father's name on checks came out as part of it.

The father, in a panic, began a discipline of iron, weakened by a large alloy of rage, nervousness, and instability. The son knew that the father's fits of temper and the resulting unjust and impossible demands would be replaced quickly by humoring and another impasse of disagreement between his parents as to what should be done.

The father and mother were trying preachment in the months before I saw the youth. He was clever enough to combat their arguments about duty, right, and wrong with half-baked philosophizing. He was not touched in the least by their tardy concern about his future. Despite his unquestionable possession of vaguely "right" desires, he could not formulate and carry out a working plan to realize them. He has no training for it. His parents might as well blame him because he cannot play the violin even though there always has been a fiddle in his room.

At college he has persisted in taking many extra days off at week-ends and the opening of terms and has refused to work when he attended classes. The effect on the boy himself of the huge amount he was spending on extremes

of self-indulgence was staggering to the parents in the days when a large fortune made the money itself no object—not that either the father or mother did anything about holding the allowance to a sensible minimum.

They brought him to me with a woeful tale about how he was devoid of all filial feeling, racing headlong toward inevitable unhappiness of which no warning seemed to impress him. The father could not control his temper over this state of affairs for three minutes on end in my office. Yet, in the first week in which the son was separated from him under my direction, this father sent four mawkishly affectionate telegrams begging the son to wire reassurance of his happiness immediately.

The boy and I have agreed on a course to try to correct the futile pleasure-seeking drive. We do not debate his thin philosophy of laziness, and no promises are exacted that he cannot fulfill. There will be no nagging or quarreling, but no vacillating about what is expected of him. He is to start at manual labor in a steel plant. He should soon learn there that he has to pay for willfulness and failure to produce.

He is to live on what he makes. His parents, fortunately for him, have had sharp reverses recently and cannot give him much money at present. They swear, I hope sincerely, that they will refuse him as much as a dime until he proves he knows what a dime is worth. If he measures up in the steel plant, he will continue his college education. If not, he will have to work out his own future as best he can, unless the parents weaken again and encourage him to wreck it.

Frankly his chances are not good. It is very late to start building the automatic work habits that should have been

trained into him in the nineteen years his parents devoted instead to installing and fortifying his dangerous equipment of chronic hacking, laziness, and boredom.

Children are born with energy that gallops off in all directions. This is not to say that they are born with work habits. Far from it. The urges toward activity must be organized before they are effective. The statement of Walter Bagehot, an economist, that "the real essence of work is concentrated energy" is true also from a psychologic standpoint.

Defects in work equipment must be studied to provide clues to the best ways of retraining. It is not enough to say that some children are industrious before they have passed infancy and that some are lazy; that some are disinterested and some alert; that some have stick-to-it-iveness and others are flighty. The point is, why are they lazy, disinterested, or flighty? No healthy, normal child is "naturally" that way.

A marked development in any of those qualities, in my opinion, can be traced to bad training. The weaknesses gain the upper hand because parents fail to put any rein upon the galloping energies of youth. These strivings for action are allowed to keep right on stampeding to the four winds without a guiding hand toward a direction by which they will arrive somewhere and without encouragement to the establishment of speed and endurance that will be invaluable on the home stretch.

A landmark of my own boyhood was set when I actually completed reading a book. I was nine years old, I am sorry to report. I had begun some twenty books, and not until then had I actually finished a single one. I had to have a prolonged incentive to reach that last page. My

spontaneous interest in the previous books had not been enough, and no one had taken the trouble to add to it or to point to the goal of a book read through as a definite achievement. I do not mean to blame my parents. I suspect that they had a hard enough time with me; but this dawdling should not have been permitted.

Probably some of the first nineteen books were unsuited to my age. If so, my parents should have been watching my activities closely enough to know it and those books should have been denied me. Once started on one that had fair interest, I should have been encouraged by a few questions or comments from my father and mother that showed their interest and approval. They should have mentioned following through to the final chapter as an accomplishment in which I could take some pride. If those inducements were not enough; if I still wanted to quit after beginning a book that clearly was not too advanced for me, I should have been *forced* to keep going to the end.

The story calls attention to the fact that, as early as the childhoods of those of us who are now in our middle years, too little cultivation of perseverance in worth-while endeavor was being demanded as an accounting for part of our long hours of freedom. The change was arriving then that has reached such alarming proportions in the present slump of rewarding work for children.

The telephone already had made serious inroads on necessary errands that gave a glow of importance and usefulness. On more pretentious streets of larger towns that wholesome educational apparatus, the backyard pump, had become almost as anachronistic as cast-iron animals, of then recent memory, were on front lawns. Families were tending to be smaller, a trend that brought with its

blessings the disadvantage of turning an increasing number of older children loose from the exacting, but personality developing, responsibility of taking care of smaller sisters and brothers.

Still there lingered in most homes at that time such things as ice-cream freezers and coffee grinders to be turned. A good many fairly prosperous families still had stoves and their boys knew without quibble that they had to carry in coal for the heaters on winter afternoons and provide kindling as well as coal for the kitchen range every day in the year before they could play.

Cooking over those hot ranges without benefit of canned products, enameled sinks, and various other time-saving devices was not so easy that the average servantless mother did not welcome, and request, the help of her daughters. Girls learned to do their share when they were little taller than the top of an oven door or the rim of a dishpan on an oilcloth-covered table. Ready-made dresses had not become so good and so cheap that many daughters of the well-to-do waited for a high school or college course to teach them how to sew a seam.

Until around 1908 upper middle-class families had horses and buggies, and of those with able-bodied sons, none except the unusually affluent hired a groom or driver. Horses were not fed and sleeked by driving into a convenient filling station and lolling through the rush of attendants who demonstrate their gasoline company's conception of the heights to which modern service should fly.

All those recollections remind us that after we welcome advances—as we should—we are forced to put our minds to it to invent a healthy amount of purposeful activity for

our children in what otherwise may be for them "the dear dead days" of the present.

Educators have told me that the idea of months of school vacation in summer was based originally upon the situation in the era of rural and small-town life when the work of boys and girls in fields and gardens was essential. There still is a good reason why rural-school vacations should be long.

It would be much better on the whole for the training of city children—most of whose fathers and mothers are not careful to require some concentrated, creative effort—if urban schools were open practically all year. Vacations totaling not more than one month in twelve could be scattered at convenient intervals. On such a full schedule more time could be provided for *directed* play every day at school, much of it outdoors. The results in body and personality building would far surpass those attained by the present plan of turning children loose for three months of frittering every year.

The kindergarten movement is a recognition of the fact that modern children learn to *do* things all too late. It has shown that systematic learning, and especially learning to use hands to some purpose, can be started successfully much earlier in life than we had come to believe after the centuries in which the sustenance of life ceased to be a struggle. At the age of five or six, children in well-conducted kindergartens develop an ability to work and to enjoy working that is surprising to anyone who is accustomed to think of boys and girls of that age as helpless.

The achievements of kindergartens provide some slight indication of what parents could accomplish with their

children by early, consistent efforts. The first definite rule I would set down for promoting work habits is that training should start in infancy. It may sound like an exaggerated statement to urge that a child be taught the rudiments of working from the time he is learning to talk. Still that is exactly when the start should be made.

Until a baby learns to use words, his only methods of expression are body movements, reaching, kicking, laughing, crying. Gradually the tendency to act out his feelings and his wants with his entire body is replaced by smaller movements of parts of the body. Language substitutes symbols for things and permits spoken requests to take the place of the acting of ideas. It simplifies the differentiation by the baby between himself and the outside world, which is one of many psychologic patterns appearing in their untrained forms in this critical period of rapid changes.

Words open the door of learning about things, of getting things more rapidly by asking for them, and of gaining praise for talking. At the same time the use of words tends to close another outlet to the personality.

Suddenly the interest of parent and child is directed toward language and intelligence development. Nearly all energy tends to be concentrated on that. As long as the child does not become a problem of discipline, little attention is paid to what he learns to *do* with his hands and body, and what emotional patterns he is developing.

In fact, very few parents expect anything at all beyond scattered energy and whimsicality at this age. They overlook that this is the very time at which the child is acquiring important new elemental reflexes and is first setting

out in the direction he will follow through life, if nothing interferes to change his course.

Many of the toys available today are good illustrations of the neglect of manipulative and emotional habits while children are enlarging their vocabularies and intelligence. Even though there has been some welcome change in recent years, the shops are cluttered with hundreds of inert representations of the possessions of the world of grown-ups. These give a momentary pleasure and some worthwhile familiarity with the apparatus of the world, but the child usually does not learn to *do* things with them because they offer so little invitation to action.

Five cents worth of jacks and a five-cent ball, from about the age of six years on, or the cheapest imaginable wooden blocks, at two to two and one-half years, are better playthings than any lifeless dummy, no matter if it costs \$100 or more.

A child learns to count with the jacks and to pit his skill in fair competition with others. With the blocks he can learn to build and to take pride in building better than the child next door. From both jacks and blocks he learns muscular co-ordination and control. From an immovable replica of a big pony within the means only of the very rich, as he sits in the motionless saddle he can learn comparatively little except what he picks up from comments of adults.

"Real horse hide! Think of that! You're a lucky boy to have a papa who can afford to buy such expensive things."

I once went into a nursery that looked more like the headquarters of Santa Claus than the playroom of one

small youngster. There were farmyards, cows, horses, automobiles, cowboy dolls as big as their owner, a house for the dolls, cooking utensils, a stove; almost every imaginable dead image. All of them were just sitting there. So was the bored-looking youngster. I watched for a while as he reached for one inanimate model after another, only to push them all aside.

Then we invented a simple game to put these dull things to use. Soon the boy had the cowboys and horses rounding up the cattle. The ranch owner drove out in the automobile to see how the round-up was progressing. Long after I was willing to stop, the boy was keenly suggesting other things we might *do*.

More than activity alone is necessary to assure good training. The manner in which a child is active is very important.

How many things are undertaken on his own initiative?

How determined is he to accomplish what he tries?

Does he drop half-completed activities only to turn to half-doing something else?

Does he react too sharply to failure and remain discouraged too long?

Does he show satisfaction in achievement?

These questions touch the basic factors in good work habits. They point to the foundation stones I urge parents to lay in infancy, long before we can think of a child's working at anything adults would call work. Neglect of these fundamental principles may result in habitually scattered energies and a dangerous bent toward daydreaming

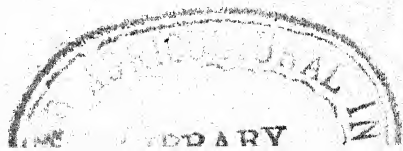
as a substitute for actual achievement before we have thought of asking our child to perform one task.

Here is a story of how underlying weaknesses in activity direction can begin in babyhood, and some definite suggestions on how they can be overcome: The boy concerned is a first child who, until he was two and one-half years old, was constantly in the company of his devoted mother or his nurse. He spent not one minute alone during the day—a handicap that more and more children in America are facing with every passing year. He accomplished nothing without the initiative and pleading of adults. Even his trips to the bathroom were associated with excessive encouragement and assistance.

The father—wise in child training—interfered at last and insisted upon two simple rules. Rule One: the boy should be left absolutely alone in the bathroom. Rule Two: toys that required manipulation should be placed before him in his nursery every day for an hour during which no grown person was to be permitted to go near him.

The morning bathroom ceremony had come to be a ritual lasting fully sixty minutes every day. It started with a procession of the lad's little court that he, in his robe, led with dignity down the hall from his bedroom door. Throughout his designated hour of special pomp and power the mother and the nurse, who also doted on the boy, cajoled him and acted as eager ladies in waiting.

Unquestionably, all this obsequious fuss with its suggestion that the whole world was turning breathlessly upon his pleasure gave him a glow of kingly satisfaction which he gladly prolonged. Within a week after the plan



of silently leaving him enthroned in isolated state was introduced, the incident—more successful from a health standpoint than before—was taking only ten minutes.

The father's "Rule Two" gave more trouble. The hope was that before the end of an hour in a room by himself the child would voluntarily begin to work with his manipulative toys. In the first ten days of the trial, he screamed for his mother during the entire hour. Only a strong-minded parent would have clung to the belief that he ever could be forced to turn to solitary, self-initiated work.

This mother, having realized the destructive effects upon him of the tendencies he was developing, went on firmly with the schedule. He heard no word nor any other sound through the closed door. On the eleventh day he gave up the struggle and busied himself with the toys. From that day on he began to build initiative and the ability to accomplish something definite with moderate speed. Although he still is socially minded and somewhat distractible, he now is equipped with the essential minimum of work habits. The foundation has been laid upon which training for the specific tasks of life can be based.

EMPLOYMENT PLANS FOR CHILDREN

THE ACTIVITIES a child seems to choose first and seems to prefer almost exclusively are not necessarily those for which his natural inclinations are best fitted.

In one home a boy busies himself with a pencil in the room where his father, an architect—perhaps an architect unsuited to the profession so far as basic inherited aptitudes go—is working on a problem. On another street another son begs his carpenter father for leftover pieces of wood to work with at his little bench beside his father's big bench.

Heredity? Probably not at all. Only two more boys among the world's millions who enjoy being near their father and doing what their fathers do. The training the boys are receiving is fine within its limits, but its limits are too narrow. Its failure lies in fostering a one-sided development.

One-sidedness will be a handicap to both boys later in making a free choice of interests and occupation. The choices should be based on the best aptitudes they have revealed after a broad early training, designed to encourage all their aptitudes before specialization.

Variety in a child's work training will increase the training's usefulness as an outlet for energies long before its help in finding the child's best niche in life becomes a pressing problem. In planning for a well-rounded devel-

opment, however, a guard should be maintained against the danger of too much diffusion of interests, which may lead to an inability to complete any task well and quickly.

Thoughtless parents depend upon fun to amuse a child and keep him off their hands until they feel inclined to amuse themselves by playing with him—often as if he were a sort of animated doll instead of a real person. If a child's play has sensible formulation and leads to thoroughness and skill, the play will give the child that much more fun; but it will take on also the importance of work, bringing returns as high as any work that can be done later in life.

After giving a youngster every opportunity to start things for himself and to pick up interests from playmates, enough suggestions should be added to keep him well occupied. Only tasks that can be accomplished by a reasonable effort should be assigned or permitted. Nevertheless, the danger lies in underexaction rather than overexaction. We should not fail in our insistence that efforts once started must be carried through to the limit of the child's capabilities every time. Consistency is the basis of good work habits, and only by consistency in training can they be established.

The tasks should be made dramatic, without dramatizing them to the point at which a youngster becomes more interested in the dramatics than in the work. The world will not go into ecstasies over every little move our children make. They must be equipped to complete uninteresting and disagreeable undertakings as well as exciting ones. We must not be afraid to make some of the training tasks mildly unpleasant.

Well-conducted work-training will instill the faculty of

looking for long-run satisfactions rather than the pleasures of any certain minute, and will assist in carrying this habit over into other life activities. We cannot truthfully tell a little girl that it is more fun at that instant to keep right on sewing on her doll dress than it is to stop and jump rope with playmates who are calling her. We *can* truthfully tell her that she will get more satisfaction in the long run by sticking at dressmaking until she accomplishes something, and then going out to enjoy the rope jumping also.

It is not necessary to expound the abstract philosophy of long-run satisfaction to a child. We should be able to stir enthusiasm by showing enthusiasm for the activity ourselves. If the pull of distractions is so strong that it prevents the arousal of any real enthusiasm, a reasonable length of time should be set for continued work before a diversion is permitted. Then we should see that the child keeps steadily at the job, without sulking, during the designated time.

We should be ready with fair, but not overexaggerated, praise after the allotted stint is completed, speeding the child to its well-earned pleasure with our compliments. We should be ready also to enforce discipline, if it should become necessary, to hold the child to the habit of finishing what he begins, not dropping work or lagging at every distraction and not becoming unhappy over foregoing other pleasures for a while.

Every enforcement of this routine will make the habit of achievement and satisfaction in achievement more automatic. Every *neglect* of enforcement will make the habit of easy distractibility, easy discouragement, puttering, and distaste for concentrated effort more automatic.

The problem can be simplified by scheduling in infancy a sort of "my day" of balanced freedom, fun, and work. Gradually, the routine should be made more exacting as the abilities of the child expand. In addition to ample time for intelligent play, certain hours should be set aside for somewhat harder activities, beginning with little duties that will require an infant to exert himself at something besides play only a few minutes in every 24 hours. Nothing except the most urgent interruptions should be allowed to interfere with the daily plans.

The habit of drifting apathetically through time is an obstacle to practically all of us who like to call ourselves fully developed. If we kept an accurate accounting of the hours when we are not trying at all or only half trying to achieve anything definite—even efficient relaxation or deep personal satisfaction—most of us would be shocked at the revelation of the extent to which we miss being fully alive.

Children trained from babyhood in the characteristic of working *well* when they work, playing *well* when they play, relaxing and resting *well* when they rest, will come much nearer than most of us ever can at our ages to a realization of Swift's wise good wish: "May you live all the days of your life."

It is difficult for most parents and nurses to grasp that work actually comes in infants' sizes. They think of it in terms of physical and material accomplishment. I am thinking of work, as done by young children, in terms of character-building habits.

I know a lad of three years who puzzled a visiting uncle by saying that he could not accept the uncle's invitation to walk to the neighborhood drug store right after dinner.

"As soon as dinner is over," the boy explained, "I always turn on the big lamp for papa, and take him his slippers and the paper."

That evening the uncle watched. The father, with visitors to talk to, did not want his slippers and paper. Nevertheless he took them and thanked his son; remarked seriously to the uncle, "He never forgets: I don't know what I should do without his help"; and was careful not to put the paper aside until the boy had left the room.

As the short legs sought a balance on top of the footstool from which the lad was reaching for the cord of the floorlamp, the father put out a steadying hand. The boy waived the assistance aside, righted himself, and lighted the lamp with an air of triumph. The entire proceeding—repeated every evening—was carried through by the boy as if the future course of the world would be affected by his evening's "work."

For a reason that he does not guess at three years, he is right. The future course of *his* world will be affected if he keeps on strengthening his feeling for doing useful things punctually, skillfully, and enthusiastically.

Of course all babies' work, like this, will not be of much immediate help to parents. It may be a bother. This fact combines with general parental carelessness and lack of vision to account for the neglect of the training. Bother or not, mothers, fathers, and nurses should gladly encourage the effort because this "helping" will be such a help to children at a most impressionable age.

Anyone to whom the assignment of actual tasks to a very young child sounds entirely too Spartan does not really understand young children and their joys. There is nothing they delight in more than helping, within their

skill and for the length of time that does not tax their powers of concentration and perseverance too much.

Normally endowed children who do not like to be of assistance have already undergone the blunting of a natural impulse by careless training. Remember that, mothers, the next time your inclination is to say: "For pity's sake get out of the way with your little carpet sweeper. I want to get this room cleaned." Think of it, fathers, when you would like to exclaim: "Go sit on the porch with that toy rake. I'm trying to get the leaves off this lawn."

A visit to a nearby nursery school will enlarge mothers' ideas of fair minimum work and hour scales at early ages. Here are only a few hints:

At one year an ordinarily intelligent child should have learned to take food from a spoon and cup held to his lips, primary lessons in these arts having begun at an age of not more than four months.

The baby is now ready to begin to learn to feed himself from a spoon and to drink from a cup he holds. The spoon and cup are the first symbols of all the mechanical devices, from vacuum sweepers to motor cars, which the child should eventually be able to manipulate for himself if he is to keep abreast of traffic in a machine age. Most mothers know this, but fail to encourage their children enough.

As skill develops to the point that justifies it, a dull knife and fork should be introduced. Self-feeding will not be a pretty sight at first, I know, but what is going on inside the child will be worth our endurance of a little soiling of the outside.

At three years, at latest, a child should begin trying to button his own clothes, even if his clumsiness delays the dressing. At the same age he can be taught to put away

his toys, which can successfully include a tricycle between the ages of two and three. Other big business opportunities present themselves in this three-year-old period. They include "helping mother" to pick up scraps of cloth from the sewing-room floor, "helping" to dust the furniture; going to the kitchen every day at certain hours to bring the "news" that luncheon or dinner will be served in a few minutes.

Children between four and one-half and five years can be interested in modeling simple objects in clay and in cutting out and pasting pictures—paper dolls, bridges, railroad engines, animals.

At six they can learn to sew and to nail thin cork-composition pieces in patterns onto a cork-composition base-board in the sets that are available inexpensively, complete with a safely light hammer. If dangerous street crossings do not forbid the risk, trips alone to a neighborhood store with a small amount of money and a list of items to be bought will be excellent experience for a six-year-old.

A thoughtful search for opportunities in any household will add chores to those in the foregoing outline. It is intended merely to supply suggestions as to the *kind* of activities of which children are capable at the earliest employable ages. When a child lags behind the average in some endeavors, his parents should take special care to encourage progress in these laggard activities, in addition to following the easier route of stimulating aptitudes, in which the child already surpasses the average. For younger children, a few little daily duties—as light as bringing a father's slippers—are enough to install the basic idea of useful work, which is a weighty consideration.

I have emphasized prekindergarten and kindergarten-

age work because the tendency of parents and nurses to neglect an early start in all habit training is particularly evident in the field of work-energy development. Another reason for stressing preschool employment is that after a child finishes kindergarten forces outside the home come to the rescue to a larger extent. More exacting schedules are enforced by the school and by a rapidly expanding circle of playmates who supply creative, imaginative, competitive, and mildly disciplinary influences in their spontaneous play.

Regular school classes mean the arrival of a new era. Fantasy and play and the routine of infants, instead of occupying most of the waking hours, now are pushed into the background. Up to the age of six, children have a multiplicity of ever-new interests, discovering the world. They are full of an excess of energy and distracted by a phantasmagoria of events and situations.

When they enter school, they sense that they no longer are babies, to be protected by their families. From now on what they can accomplish on their own will count. Look back in your memories and you may recapture some of the thrill the average child of six has when first opening a "real" book for a "real" lesson. "This is life, at last!"

Then what happens? In far too many cases, hard bumps and discouragement. The work the teacher expects may seem to a child to outrage a worker's right to leisure, especially if the child has not attended kindergarten and has not been trained in the work idea.

As a complication of this crisis in production demands, such pulls as yearnings for the "home nest" often are felt keenly. In a comparatively large group of new acquaint-

ances, financial and social distinctions also begin sticking up their unattractive noses more ostentatiously than they did in the sheltered nursery days with such questions as, "Does your father belong to Meadowbrook?" Youngsters may feel a dim stirring of the notion that such troubles are entirely too much to bear on top of an assignment of ten three-letter words in spelling. Unfortunately, "this is life," too.

We can help our children over the bumps without giving them the dangerous illusion that the whole world is one sweet and sticky mass of milk and honey. Now our dramatization of living as an adventurous game, full of exciting possibilities for work as well as play, begins to approach the height of its season.

I am not advising a harangue of inspirational speeches. Later on a child may realize that it is worth thinking about when a man like Theodore Roosevelt, whose gusto for accomplishment carried him undaunted through discouragements, expresses in his habitual conduct as well as in so many words the motto: "Hit the line hard." The best way to dramatize purposeful activities for children of six, seven, and eight, however, is by sharing an interest in the activities, leaving mottoes to a secondary place.

One of my friends came to me glumly recently and asked me to give his son a mental test. "The boy has been doing so poorly at school," the father said, "that my wife and I have been forced to admit he probably is a little retarded."

"It is so entirely unnecessary to give that boy a mental test," I said, "that I refuse to do it. I know him, and I am sure that he probably is above normal in intelligence.

His trouble is that he does not know how to apply his energies. I have heard you moaning about his lack of interest. What have you done to stimulate it?"

The father's reply might have been made truthfully by millions of parents.

"I suppose I have not done much," he said.

In one way this father was different from the majority. He eagerly adopted the suggestion of a new plan when the failure of his previous attitude became apparent. That night and every night thereafter, he spent an hour with his son, reading books and talking. Their conversations ranged unstiltedly, without preachment, from discussions of incidents in the stories to mention of the father's and mother's pride in their boy and their hopes for the big things he would be able to do.

The hour has been an adventure for the boy from the first. He soon began to show evidence of a realization that his father considered learning dramatic and important. School has stopped being dull. He now is interested in doing well in everything. His writing and drawing—particularly sore spots before—improved so rapidly that his teacher marveled. The mother of one of the boys in the grade in which this lad formerly trailed showed some polite doubts whether an eight-year-old had actually made those pictures. Within one month after the father had dolefully decided that his son was a little stupid, the boy led his class in school.

"That's a smart boy, all right," the father chuckled proudly when he reported the class leadership; "especially considering that he has a father who is too thick-headed to see the difference between a potential star pupil and a moron."

I wonder how many fathers and mothers whose children have enthusiastically read Kipling's "Captains Courageous" and "Toomai of the Elephants," or been excited by them in the motion-picture versions, have given a thought to the fact that both these stories are concerned with the satisfaction and the romance of work. In one, a pampered son of wealth finds zest in life by winning his way on a fishing boat. The Elephant Boy knew the joy of being fully alive from babyhood. He wanted to be as good a hunter as his father and his grandfathers had been. Kipling is justified in giving us the impression that Toomai probably would have achieved his goal in time, even if he had not had the "lucky break" of seeing what none of the older hunters had seen, the legendary elephant dance.

At this point some fathers and mothers will be ready to second the objection of their children that deep-sea fishing and riding an elephant in a big-game hunt are thrilling, whereas our daily tasks are only a bore. Granting the unquestionable inherent thrill of dangerous adventure, there is still a flaw in such reasoning. A large part of the adventure we see in fishing and riding elephants resides in the way we have learned to look at them. Romance is always where we are not. If we could only learn to find it where we are!

I am not denying that work must be arduous sometimes when I assert that a zestful approach to it can give it an overtone of pleasure, such as Toomai experienced. To most sons of fishing captains and most sons of elephant hunters, it would be a bigger adventure to polish a motor car on the driveway of a modern American home than to cut fish bait or wash an elephant. Cutting fish bait and washing elephants are work, not adventure, for those who

have to do them time and again—tiresome, disheartening work for those who are not trained to feel the thrill of skillfulness and accomplishment.

Is not our failure to make the most of opportunities which call to us every day responsible for the prevalence of the feeling that “we must not look for a golden life in an iron age”? This statement of a notion that continues to gain force is from an old English proverb. It was already in circulation early in the seventeenth century, a time to which many men now look back sighingly because life was “sweet and simple” then, they think. The proverb was first uttered in that bygone era by a person who obviously was glancing ruefully backward to some earlier “more pleasant days,” in which men undoubtedly had been pining for a still earlier past in Merrie England.

The tendency of men to be blind to the possible glamour of accomplishment in the *present* has been increased immeasurably by one of the unfortunate offshoots of our fortunately increasing leisure. Most of us fail to inspire children with a desire to work, because we ourselves think of pleasure only in association with play, never in terms of work or what habitual efficiency will do for us in all our relations to ourselves and to the world outside working hours.

If we have vision and try, we can see and dramatize some romance in work that we might usually consider as undramatic as the nose on a face. From my own childhood, I can recall distinctly the interest my father stirred in my younger brother and me when he occasionally told us about his experiences in salesmanship. As I look back on it, there is really no overpowering drama in selling furniture; but my father made his work seem glamorous

to us then. I am sure that I should have been a better-trained man if the pull of his newspaper had not prevented his telling us about his work as often as we were willing to listen. That was nearly every night. He did not realize what a valuable service he was doing us.

As children grow older, the difficulties of finding things for them to do in this age of comparatively easy living become more pressing. Find work for them. If you have servants, have your daughter cook some meals and make some beds anyway. If you have sufficient money to hire any number of gardeners and men to cut your lawn, do not let the gardeners' sons and the lawn-cutters' sons have all the advantages of learning how to beautify your home.

A scale of "wages" for work delivered to the family provides more wholesome training than any allowance that gives boys and girls the expectation of getting something for nothing.

Details of the proper employment for boys and girls as they grow older will have to be worked out to fit individual cases and situations. An underlying truth which all parents should keep in mind is that there is no such thing as *natural* laziness in a person of average physical health. Even real physical illness must be rather severe to make noticeable inroads upon the energy drive of an individual with strong work habits.

Parents who explain, "You see, the child never was very strong," should be able to see that the reiteration of statements like this in front of a girl or a boy is a strong encouragement to laziness when the basic physical limitation, if unexaggerated, would be no handicap worth considering.

Laziness is a symptom. The disease lies deeper. Lazy

people who are normally healthy have plenty of energy. It fairly sizzles out of them. They start one thing after another, although they fail to finish anything. Or perhaps they never get tired of just talking, or of playing games, or of carrying on flirtations. Never for a waking instant does their sizzling energy fail. They simply lack the training to direct it into any channel that will give them lasting satisfaction.

One of my patients is a man twenty-five years old who expresses a high regard for the idea of work in the abstract. He is not lazy; does not object at all to strenuous activity. I cannot think of anyone at the moment whom I would rather have to help me pull a car out of a ditch or to do anything that could be accomplished fairly quickly—with some tinge of novelty or a satisfaction to be collected without a minute's delay.

Yet this man has to make a decision every day of the week about starting to his office. Once there, he has to decide several times a day whether to continue the task that happens to be in front of him. Every time his job becomes associated with anything unpleasant, as the best of jobs do occasionally, he has to decide all over again whether he should quit or stick.

The habit of making a thousand decisions a year—instead of a single final one—adds tremendously to the odds in favor of wrong decisions. This man frequently makes wrong ones. Often he has stayed away from the office on excuses too thin for any employer to believe. More frequently, he has shown irritability that got him into trouble when he has determined to carry on "heroically" in some distasteful little duty. He holds a job about a year,

on the average, and then loses it; each time because of his own attitude.

Many years ago his fond grandparents did the things that caused him to lose his position last month, and probably will cause him within 12 months to lose the new one he obtained last week. He was passed back and forth between the homes of his maternal and paternal grandfathers and grandmothers. If the slightest incident at one of his homes displeased him, he was welcomed at the other, where the annoyance he had suffered was sure to be exaggerated because of the jealousy between the two branches of the family.

Until he was nearly grown he was never forced to do a thing he did not want to do. One of the grandfathers, ambitious for him, finally insisted that he should go through college. By that time only the notion of having a degree interested him. He was not interested in the work through which he could attain the degree.

We can find prototypes of that young man in nearly every representative business or professional group, but we cannot find them in any one place long if the same instability in them has reached the advanced stage it has reached in him. The more common symptoms, which nearly all of us have noticed in others if not in ourselves, are along the lines of general inefficiency, annoying undependability in little things, a tendency to chronic disgruntled discouragement, a magnification of the difficulties of every assignment, and a poorly concealed resentment of "dictatorial bosses" and "absurd company rules."

"I guess any place else would be as bad as this," a typical sufferer from poor energy direction remarks. "They can

make me stand the gaff because I have to, but they can't make me like it."

His associates, who have not noticed any particularly severe "gaff," and who rather enjoy their work on the whole, become bored with his grumbling. His employer also will become bored with the easily observed point of view that the concealed grumbling reflects. The worst part is that he probably bores himself as much as he does others.

Self-boredom is a malady that threatens to become epidemic in the Western World. One of the germs of it is physical and mental laziness acquired by long years of misdirected or entirely undirected training.

That fact warrants a conspicuous place in the roundup of any discussion of energy direction. We are so likely to think that the rewards of effort are limited to money and reputation, forgetting the wisdom behind the epigram: "Black Care rarely sits behind the rider whose pace is fast enough."

In all habit training, and particularly in work training, we could get further by not chattering constantly about success and happiness. Of course we should seek real happiness and success, but the regrettable truth is that no one can be absolutely guaranteed unfailing happiness or outstanding success, under the generally accepted definition of the words.

All we can honestly assure our children is that by and large they will hit only what they aim at and that if they are well equipped and work hard they have an *excellent* chance of getting their share of this world's goods, and plaudits, and joys. Beyond "an excellent chance," our promises regarding money, acclaim, and joys cannot go.

This being the case, why not give a little more attention to a blessing, rarely mentioned now, that we can positively guarantee to every normal and healthy child, man and woman in the world who has the proper emotional and mental training? That blessing is *alert interest* in life and living. It makes for lasting happiness and for a more durable *personal* success than can be enscrolled on any bank book or echoed in any roar of cheers. The ability to direct energy to a definite end is a vital part of it.

WHAT IF YOUR PEOPLE ARE UNSTABLE?

THERE IS not an old family album of any completeness whose yellowing pages do not contain likenesses of some eccentric individuals. In fact, really serious psychologic upsets can be found in every clan, even the proudest and most able. Most of these upsets have no scientifically ascertainable connection with any physical fault. If such apparently psychic disturbances are "in the blood," they are in the blood of all of us to a greater or less degree.

Actually, we have little knowledge of the part that heredity may play in emotional difficulties of any kind in persons of seemingly normal and healthy brain and body.

Did the brilliant young Abraham Lincoln's emotional attack result solely from an encounter with a peculiar combination of circumstances that his particular environment and training had made intolerable to him, although he could withstand the strain of other combinations of circumstances that might look more trying to a man of quite different training? Or was Lincoln's break due to a heritable, constitutional flaw? The question clearly does not lend itself to absolute and final *proof* in the present stage of science.

We might suspect that Lincoln's backwoods environ-

ment and homely training accounted for unusual susceptibility to anxiety over his proposed wedding to socially ambitious Mary Todd. We might further suspect that he would have worried less if he had been more deeply in love. We know it was on the night he failed to appear for the announced wedding that friends found him in an emotional condition which caused them to guard him and take his knife away from him, and led several who knew him to assert later that his fine mind had snapped.

We know that no physical basis has been discovered to explain emotional upheavals such as that which continued to cripple Lincoln's activities for months in this period. We know that the brain and body tissues he inherited had functioned excellently before; and we know that they were strong enough after his attack had passed to carry him through crisis after crisis in his splendid career, including the stresses of piloting the nation in its most tremendous storm.

Not only the complicated nature of the problem makes the relationship of our heredity to our emotional life one of science's most mooted points but, as might be expected in any field so touched by prejudice, part of the small available supply of data has been collected in a way that casts doubt upon its scientific usefulness.

To support preconceived theories, we are inclined to trace illustrious names through such directories of prestige as *Who's Who*, overlooking the number in admittedly good families who do not make good despite their advantages. Scanning the rolls of jails, paupers' homes, houses of prostitution, and state hospitals to build a sociological case against notorious tribes, we are in danger of underestimat-

•

ing the number in admittedly bad families who do not "make bad" despite their disadvantages. And when we have totaled our surprising scores, for that matter, we still are left with the original question, "How much is heredity and how much is environmental training?"

Where records reveal more than average emotional instability in families of more fortunate environment, there remains a similar question. Does the fault lie in erratic training by parents who have themselves been trained into emotional instability by their erratic parents? Certainly this, rather than bad heritage, passes many family failings on, even unto the third and fourth generations.

Then there is the harmful pressure of the dread of insanity in families that have decided—nearly always on insufficient evidence—that they "have a *heritage* of insanity."

My advice to all parents who are worrying over family records of instability is to apply the energy that goes into useless worry to the thoughtful rearing of their children. The advice is especially timely since advances in recent years in diagnosis and successful treatment have increased the number of cases on accurate records, giving some alarmists the impression that the entire human population of the globe will eventually be mad if the "current rate of increase" continues. Timid parents now are wasting valuable time fretting over fears of bad heredity from relatives whose obvious need for psychiatric treatment would have gone unrecognized in a less enlightened day.

In sharp contrast to all scientific doubts as to the effect of heredity upon psychologic states stands the effect of early training, of which there can be no reasonable doubt.

If mothers and fathers would work hopefully and consistently every time their children's behavior calls for help, instead of hopelessly seeking in the shortcomings of their kin an excuse for doing nothing, we could rest assured that there soon would be a gratifying decrease in psychologic disabilities.

ILLNESS—REAL AND OTHERWISE

THIS TALK about never letting anything interfere with training," pleasant Mrs. Mother-of-four told me sharply, "is all very well if your child is well. What if he is sick? Nearly every one of us veterans could cite you a familiar five-letter word meaning interruption. It is spelled c-o-l-i-c. Did you ever walk the floor with a colicky baby?"

She smiled sweetly, in approval, I trust, when I made the obviously appropriate reply that I never had; and never would knowingly do anything so injurious to an innocent, trusting infant, sick or well. Then she continued seriously:

"Colic is a comparatively short and easy trouble. There are worse things, like measles and broken legs. And how about scarlet fever, or typhoid? You know as well as I do that they make training impossible."

She would have been unanswerable on that point if she had only said "difficult" instead of "impossible." No one can deny that sickness complicates the training of children, especially if dangerous and prolonged. Being seriously ill complicates life for grown-ups, too; and so does their habit of feeling sickly when they are perfectly well physically.

I am not at all sure that parents should be worried more

by the dangers of real illness than they should be by the danger that they will unintentionally implant chronic invalidism in their bodily healthy children. To most mothers and fathers, however, physical illness appears to be the more possessing problem. So we shall look first at clearly defined maladies or injuries that make it essential to keep a child in bed or at least to disrupt his normal routine.

Naturally, you are touched by the child's discomfort and suffering. It may be that you are justifiably anxious about his recovery. Your temptation, of course, is to indulge him in every possible way. Still you would never yield to the temptation if you had a chance to observe how many behavior problems are started by lax training during just such periods of stress.

If anything, just and fair discipline should be given more attention in sickness than at any other time. Children, like their elders, are petulant, irritable, and temperish when they are ill. Their mood in itself generates little bad traits that become firmly fixed, big, bad traits after they are frequently rewarded with extra attentions and favors. No matter how serious the illness is, this indulgence can be avoided.

One of the most fearfully spoiled boys I ever had the displeasure of meeting was getting worse steadily when he became critically ill. Sick unto death after a surgical operation, with graduate nurses in attendance night and day, he experienced in the hospital the only consistent discipline he ever had known.

When he returned to his home, his parents—who had despaired of making him behave normally—were gleeful

over the transformation. He soon relapsed into his former ways because his father and mother were as careless with him as ever; but that is another and a sadder story, having nothing to do with the possibility of maintaining training even in the face of an almost fatal sickness.

The discipline required is about like that which this boy had in a well-run hospital—no more and no less. That it should be *no less* is especially hard for loving mothers and fathers to keep in mind.

They should hide their anxiety, as a good physician does, when their child is ill. The chances are that the child already will be interested too much in his feelings, even without his parents' extraordinary encouragements toward self-pity. Medicine should be given in a businesslike way, not with a parade of sympathy that makes the child feel like a martyr to troubles that no one should be called upon to bear. All necessary vigils by the bedside should be kept without fail; but no unnecessary ones. Warm, affectionate approval should be shown as usual for all behavior that promotes the child's future self-realization; and parents should be sure not to relax their disapproval of all behavior that is destructive to the child's best future interests.

When we succeed in following these simple rules, the child's recovery from his *physical* illness will leave him with no new emotional scars and with no burden of invalidism.

Physical illness is sure to hit us once in a while. Invalidism can grip us continuously, in sickness and in health, until death do us part. The two things are most often confused by the parents whose children would profit most

by a clear distinction between them. So much of the puniness that afflicts mankind exists only in the mind!

There you and I and all of us fall down; or at least stumble oftener than we should, largely, I am sure, because of flaws in our early training. Considering that we are a hardy lot on the average and that we are aided to physical health, long life, and the avoidance of bodily pain by skillful physicians, it is rather disgusting how much we whine.

In using the friendly greeting, "How are you?" it is safer to run the words together in strictly conventional tones, and get the conventional response, "I'm well, thank you!" from a seemingly hale and hearty acquaintance. Put the salutation as a direct and interested question and you take a definite risk of being buttonholed for a long recital of aches and woes. It will tax your sympathies. It may tax your patience, also, if your friend's rapid cataloging of his symptoms leaves you no chance to break in with a word about how far from well you yourself feel.

Much of our suffering is an excuse for being only half-alert and half-efficient. The excuse is fabricated for us by automatic emotional patterns we have not learned to control. It is they who whisper, "You are handicapped by indigestion," when we find situations are becoming too trying for us. They whisper ever so softly. We cannot hear them, as a rule, when we are actively interested and enjoying ourselves.

Only under special conditions can we imagine that the Queen of the Junior Prom will pause to experience a twinge of agony from a headache (with no fever and no ascertainable physical basis) at the moment when she is

being crowned amid spotlights and applause. It is easier to believe that a look at the questions in the algebra examination at the end of the term, in which she has been so outstandingly popular, will bring on the affliction or even a dead faint.

If she has become so frail that "one of her awful, unexplainable headaches" can spoil a dance or any event to which she has been looking forward with delight, we probably shall have to go far back into her precollege days to find the primary causes.

The pernicious malady of invalidism, as distinguished from definite bodily illness and injury, runs through whole families. It is passed on from parents to children; not by heredity, but by talk and example. Undoubtedly you have seen the virus being injected into boys and girls. Is not the following account of a home that I have been visiting only too familiar?

The family rather prides itself upon its supposed lack of physical vitality on both the father's and mother's sides. When any demand turns up that the father, the mother, and the mother's mother, who lives with them, are not keenly interested in meeting, they are "just too tired to feel up to it." The children are as healthy and energetic as any scampering squirrels when they want to be; but even in this first exuberance of their youth the proposal of any *unwelcome* activity strikes them numb with fatigue.

A typical exhibition was that of the seven-year-old son. Only after much calling and coaxing, he was persuaded by his mother to pause in a romping game long enough to hear her request that he go to the corner drug store. He slumped suddenly into an attitude of complete exhaustion

and pleaded to be spared the ordeal. He won. His mother is "not strong" herself, you see, and realizes what it means to "tax yourself beyond your endurance." We are safe in assuming that the little boy and his bouncing brothers also are rapidly reaching a full realization of that danger. They will carry on the family tradition.

In another household I know, there is a veritable epidemic of headaches whenever anything goes wrong. The mother had to go to bed not long ago after a truck hit her car, parked in front of the home. The father hurried from the office, looked ruefully at the crushed fender, "choked down his dinner alone" (his words) and went to bed almost immediately with a "splitting headache." Two days later their nine-year-old daughter had such a bad headache that she could not take her music lesson. Her parents are sorry to report that she, too, has suffered from them for the past three years.

Had a party been in the offing instead of a music lesson, she might have felt less pain that time; but before she is old enough to go to be the queen of her Junior Class dance, some little thing, like the failure of a new dress to fit exactly as it should, may be capable of causing her temples to throb throughout what could otherwise be a joyous evening.

The history of a case similar to hers will indicate the opportunity to correct tendencies toward invalidism before they become an adult handicap. The girl was eight years old when her parents sought psychiatric advice because of the terrifying pains around her heart. This was a second acute attack. The first one had come three years before. A physician then had advised removal of her

tonsils. On this latest recurrence, another physician had put her to bed for three weeks and had prescribed mild sedatives.

Both physicians had said plainly that there was nothing seriously wrong with the girl's heart; but the question remained muddled in the parents' minds and in hers.

The girl's father is a devoted son of a dominating mother who has stressed health precautions until he lives in fear that illness will take his children, his wife, his mother, his sister, or himself. The girl's mother was normally fearless when she married, but two decades with her husband have left her almost as timid as he is about illness.

The father's mother guarded her granddaughter's health as closely as she had guarded her son's, and the girl spent much time with her grandparents. When she was three years old, her grandfather developed heart disease. It was only a few weeks later that the girl suffered her first heart attack—"sticking pains" exactly like her grandfather's, according to her description.

The grandmother, beside herself with worry, proclaimed this evidence of her wisdom in always insisting upon extreme caution and in warning the child against endangering her health. The acute pain passed in a short time, but the girl remained sickly and sheltered.

The mother decided three years later to take the child to a camp for quiet and fresh air, as the family doctor advised. This caused a furore in the family, because the suburban camp the mother selected had no physician in constant attendance. It was only thirty minutes away from their city home. The father, backed by his mother, angrily refused to visit his wife and daughter at the camp.

The girl knew of the quarrel and of the unhappiness it caused her mother. She knew also that her poor health caused her mother deep concern.

The acute attacks that followed struck the child late one night. She was rushed from the camp to her home. The father and grandmother, hovering in sincere anguish at the bedside, said that this was exactly what they had expected when a sick girl was taken to a place "miles from all medical care."

After the girl had spent three weeks in bed, a re-examination by a pediatrician of unquestioned authority showed that she had no trace of heart abnormality and that she was in excellent physical condition in all other respects.

We returned her to school at once, and told her to play to her heart's content, without any fear of injuring herself—a thing she had not done for years. It goes without saying that the sedatives were stopped short. She was told what a strong heart she had, and that it would have to go on beating without the assistance of her parents or a doctor—sticking pains or not. The sticking pains ceased a few days later. A healthy diet was outlined to take the place of her puny mincing, and her mother forced her to eat all that was prescribed. The child is gaining weight and strength rapidly.

Her return to health is giving her much more fun than she has been having. She had enjoyed the drama of being sick. She now sees what a bore its restrictions were. Young as she is, she understands that her background of exaggerated fear of sickness was what caused her to be sick. I am sure that she will keep her present hardihood

if we can cure her grandmother of unnecessary worries about her and if her father does not suffer a relapse into overanxiety.

"Thank goodness, no such foolishness goes on in my family," you are thinking.

How sure are you? Something very like it in all fundamentals can look less obvious.

Does your yearning for your children's health trick you into listening sympathetically and fearfully to prolonged reports from them of every trifling ill they have?

Do you distinguish between the baby's temperish screaming when he merely wants to be petted and his fretful crying when he is really ill? And after you respond to the wails, do you pet the baby and pace the floor with him? Or do you simply take his temperature like a good nurse, calling a doctor if the baby is ill, but shunning dramatization of his complaints?

Whenever a child so much as scratches a finger, do you gush consolation over him? Or do you apply a good antiseptic and bind up the wound with calm efficiency?

Do you constantly warn, "That will make you sick!" when there is no great cause for concern?

Do you nag interminably over the fact that the children will not eat enough substantial food, thus encouraging the habit by giving them satisfying attention without any decisive action on your part?

Possibly with nothing more to alarm you than a tendency to put on weight and to oversleep, do you fill your children's ears with discussions of your indigestion? You would be surprised, and perhaps you should be ashamed, to learn how many of the foods that invariably make you sick are on the standard list supplied to delicate hospital patients.

When you are a little ill, do you set an example of accepting discomfort or pain with some resignation? Or do you visit upon the next generation the idea that complete surrender, moans, and groans are the natural consequence when you do not feel well?

Your children are sure to have mild gastrointestinal upsets, vomiting, and headaches from time to time. Do you make each minor attack a crisis and allow the children to use it long after they are completely well as a reason for avoiding anything that they dislike to do?

If you truthfully can answer every one of these plain questions with a perfect score, I hail you as a paragon among parents.

TO HEALTH AND GOOD APPETITE

THE FOUNDATION of a healthy attitude is emotional balance and control. Failure to establish it leaves the underlying weakness that may bring invalidism, as well as other destructive characteristics that handicap men and women.

Children who are ill-adjusted emotionally are driven to personally harmful ways of expressing themselves. Self-interest is part of our inborn equipment. It tries to find an outlet in every possible direction, unhealthy as well as healthy. We must take the trouble to supply enough constructive bids for children's attention and self-expression, *outside* the shell of their own inner feelings. Those who are not normally outward-looking in this way turn back into themselves for their satisfactions. They are the ones who are most likely to substitute the enjoyment of *disability* for the enjoyment of ability.

Nearly all their aches and sicknesses will be figments of their emotions. These afflictions are not intentionally imagined. They will be none the less real and painful to their victims because of the absence of physical causes. It is clear, moreover, that emotional states and pains that have only an emotional basis in the beginning, are capable in turn of influencing our physical condition by disturbing the normal functioning of our bodies. Some types of actual physical illness can be complicated in this way.

Actually, a man with a strong heart will never be able

to worry himself into real heart disease. No matter what constant heart-agonies, flutterings, and terrors of sudden death he suffers mentally, his sound heart will beat steadily and he will go on living—if an abjectly terrified existence is “living.”

It is true, nevertheless, that when organic heart disease, high blood pressure, and many other less serious physical illnesses really are present, they can be made much worse by the uncontrolled flow of violent moods. Even if no serious illness is involved, physical effects can follow emotionally induced illness, for example, emotionally caused constipation, vomiting, or refusal of food.

The emphasis placed here upon the emotional aspects of illness does not imply that parents should not do their best to correct physical shortcomings, under the advice of a competent physician. What I am urging is that if a child is physically lacking in any way, the correction should be made with as little fuss as possible. We should avoid building up in the child a feeling that he is a weakling. A thinnish boy can be encouraged to play and exercise without stressing physique to an extent that makes him ashamed of being unable to look like the muscle-knotted Hercules in a dumbbell advertisement.

Most mothers and fathers lean too much toward seeking a physical explanation for all disorders and demanding immediate, drastic action. Suppose a good physician says that rest and plenty of water are all the child needs. Parents should be careful not to hint that a well-informed, aggressive doctor would have advised a long course of nostrums or a tonsil operation. The competent physician is thoroughly well informed about the sickness, and exactly right in his unsensational prescription.

In cases in which the physical causes of illness are not severe enough to demand attention at once—and especially if the possible causes are obscure—I should be inclined to postpone any radical physical treatment of children who show a tendency toward emotional invalidism. I would find out first what elimination of the invalidism can accomplish.

To illustrate: One of our nursery-school patients was a girl of two and one-half years who was distressingly emaciated. The parents, whose middle age her birth had brightened, said themselves that they never had been able to keep from worrying too much about her health. At the time of which I write, they had a legitimate cause for special concern because of her recurrent spells of vomiting and her abnormal lack of appetite.

The trouble was complicated by the fact that a physician had found a possible stricture (a narrowing) of the esophagus, the passage from the mouth to the stomach. The narrowing was so slight, however, that the physician did not believe it was enough to account for the symptoms. He leaned toward a belief that her distress was due entirely to emotional causes. Subsequent events proved he was right.

When first taken to the nursery school the baby, who never had been with other children, showed no desire to join in play. She accepted the school life, nevertheless, without the spells of crying that are usual in a child so young. She smiled wanly at times, with an effort that appeared to be unnaturally forced, and did not object when the other children led her around.

She ate all her first school meal readily enough until the dessert (sliced bananas) was given her. From it she

turned her head away in disgust. She was persuaded to swallow one small bite; and promptly vomited the entire meal.

The teacher felt her way slowly after that. In the first place there admittedly was a chance that the slight abnormality of the esophagus might be responsible. Even if it weren't, an automatic vomiting reflex as easily set off as this baby's would put her beyond training control unless she was handled carefully. The often successful plan of withholding some tempting dainty until other things are eaten could not be applied here. She had so little appetite that no food tempted her. For that matter, she found everything else about as unexciting as food.

The only way out was the indirect one of *creating* an interest and then using the interest as a lure. This interest soon appeared. The baby began to ask the names of other babies in a few days. Next she was throwing a ball to the child for whom she had developed the most comradeship; smiling more easily and naturally. By the end of a week she was playing happily and eagerly with all the children of her age.

Upon this indication that she felt secure with her new friends and the teacher, the feeding problem was tackled again. Portions were reduced, but the teacher insisted kindly that the baby finish each course, and finish the entire meal before she could play. The vomiting did not return.

Still the little girl toyed with her food so much that she had to remain at the table long after the others were back at their games. The "eat first, play later" rule was adhered to strictly. Every day the pull of the child's desire not to miss time from play became more marked, and every day

she speeded her eating a little. In a few weeks she was finishing her meals—full portions now—as quickly as any child in her group. Naturally, she picked up weight and energy.

Earlier good training could have kept the girl from getting into the condition she had reached. From the time a baby first takes solid foods he should be taught to eat what is best for his physical development. Under such a plan, firmly followed, a child who is encouraged to normal exercise will like practically all wholesome foods. This will be to the advantage of his health, personal enjoyment, and popularity in later life as well as in childhood. How do you like guests who will touch only one-third the courses you serve them?

The plan of serving very young children at a separate table, with only one person present to see that they eat properly, will be a help to their appetites, to say nothing of the appetites of sensitive observers of beginner's luck with a spoon.

Family dinners are long and tedious for a young child. He soon senses the fact that a clearly enunciated opinion on all hot potatoes can turn the attention of these boring adults away from an expression of their views on the tax problem into a direction that is more interesting, personal, and flattering. The larger and more responsive the audience, the greater the temptation becomes to shift the talk. Is there anyone who has been fortunate enough never to be present at a meal that revolved from start to finish around totally ineffective pleading with a child?

The first thing to suspect when a prolonged loss of appetite becomes apparent in a child who has been eating well

is, of course, a physical cause. A physician should be consulted in such cases. A distaste for food at any given meal may arise, however, from some slight physical indisposition that will pass in a few hours. Again it may be only a whim that causes a baby not to crave a certain food occasionally.

I should pretend not to notice such minor fluctuations at first, to avoid the possibility that I should cause the child to make an issue of what he otherwise might quickly forget; but if a child pronounced healthy by a physician refused to eat adequately for more than four or five days, I should quietly tell him to eat. If he did not obey, I should neither nag nor plead. I should first try withholding from him the foods he does like until after he has eaten those he does not like so well. If that failed, the next step would be to deny him all food until he is hungry enough to eat a healthy amount of any good food without whining or making any other protest.

I happen to be well acquainted with a boy who was forced in infancy to go entirely without food for three meals because he refused to eat carrots. After that he ate them readily. When he was ten years old, I asked him casually at a family dinner what his favorite food was. Until told of the long-forgotten incident in his personal history he was puzzled by his parents' laughter over his reply that his favorite food was carrots. My personal idea is that if we can learn to like carrots, we can learn to like any wholesome food.

Here we must glance back at the basic precept—be *effective*, every time, in everything you set out to do in training. When you tell your child that he cannot have

anything to eat until dinner if he does not eat his luncheon, do not grant an ice cream soda or a piece of pie an hour later.

Enforcement of the rule that a child must go hungry until he consents to eat as he should does not present the dangers of starvation that many indulgent mothers fear. The erratic diet dictated by spoiled children's whims is the really widespread threat to health. By and large this ever-present eating problem, for a child who has no organic illness, has less relation to the child's *natural* appetite than it has to lack of respect for parents' suggestions and a generally sickly training for life.

The regime I have been outlining may seem cold and heartless to mothers and fathers of children who never enjoy rugged health. Yet showing some judgment in training a child during sickness and in training him against baseless invalidism leaves plenty of opportunity to follow a parental heart's dictates to all sensible lengths. In fact, a background of normal affection is a prerequisite to a healthy outlook. Lack of it may bring on a display of emotional illness as a plea against loneliness.

I'll tell a story about it, since I am sure that the mention of a rather unusual exception to the general rule will not make my readers forget that *overpetting* and *overanxiety* are the faults in most households, probably including yours.

The mother of the boy died at his birth. He lived alternately with his two grandmothers until his father at last decided to employ a housekeeper and establish a home for him. Apparently, the boy had been given fine physical and routine care, but he had been apathetic since infancy.

A physician diagnosed his trouble as glandular (per-

sistent thymus). About once a month the boy was taken to the physician's office for a special treatment. After every one of these treatments, he showed a marked improvement in interest. Then he gradually slipped back into apathy. At the age of two he was pronounced cured of his glandular illness. Still he had the same lethargy.

He was so easily controlled that his nurse left him pretty much to himself, once she had seen well to his physical care. His father and grandmothers, although they were fond of him, were too busy to be with him much. His only playmates were unusually aggressive older children, who found his interests babyish and discouraged any spontaneous impulse he had. No consistent effort had been made to change his listlessness, because his family clung to the idea that he had an inborn tendency to glandular trouble that could not be corrected.

He was two and a half years old when he was sent to a nursery school. There he sat around; apathetic, idle, crying more than is normal, never speaking unless spoken to, pronouncing single words plainly, but never using full sentences. His food and toilet habits were good. In all else he had to be given continuous directions to accomplish the simplest thing. Every day he had to be told to open the door and enter the nursery schoolroom. "Now take off this legging; now the other; now your hat." Attempts to stir his interest caused him to say, "Huh!" whereupon he would go back into his shell.

This extraordinary behavior lasted two months. Then a sudden and exceptionally dramatic shift came. He was dreamily watching the goldfish in the schoolyard pool when the rock on which he was standing gave way and he plunged headlong into the shallow water. The teacher

pulled him out, removed his clothes, and rubbed him vigorously with a towel, crooning to him. Much to her surprise, he did not cry at all. When he returned next day he was a changed child. He was bright, began to talk to the other children, entered into their games, and soon was laughing readily and heartily.

The teacher immediately concluded that this was one of the comparatively rare children who have not had enough demonstration of affection. An investigation after she had told me of the case revealed the home background I have described and supported her conclusion. In view of this special situation, she continued to make much fuss over the boy *until the time came* when it was evident that he was getting enough affection response from his playmates to satisfy him. From then on he did very well indeed without further coddling.

The father, awakened now to his son's needs, wonders how much of the noticeable temporary improvement after each of the glandular treatments was due to their effect on the glands, and how much resulted from the special attentions of the trip with him and the nurse and the meeting with an interesting, sympathetic physician. Undoubtedly both were valuable.

What is more to the point is that if it had not been for the nursery school's timely help, the father probably would have gone on considering his son's lethargy hopeless. Despite the physician's assurance that all glandular difficulties had been corrected, like many other parents he might have continued to do nothing constructive, blaming a physical shortcoming instead of bad training.

The ideal family would have an affection for its children so warm, and deep, and *intelligent* that it would keep up

training even when they seem to be ill; even when they obviously *are* ill. It would take all sensible precautions against disease and injury, without creating a foolish dread of them.

It would be a hopeful family. In this cheerful environment, unless bodily illness is definitely present, health would be taken for granted. It really is granted more often than not, remember, although we never should get that impression from our favorite conversational preoccupation, next to the weather.

Here is hoping that there can be more of such ideal families; and here is to your children's good health. May they never be dangerously ill—and may they never feel sickly when they are well.

WHY SO TEMPERISH, GLOOMY,
AND DISCOURAGED?

HOW OFTEN when we remark that someone is a creature of moods do we realize the full force of what we are saying?

We know, of course, that we can be trained to punch typewriter keys automatically when the concept of certain combinations of letters flashes through our brains. We are not likely to notice that it is mostly training that causes us to become angry without thinking—and sometimes to punch noses—when we hear certain words. The effect upon us of these “fighting words” has practically no direct connection with literal meaning. The “bloody insult” of one country or locality may have to be explained to a man of a different background before he can comprehend how such a seemingly innocuous expression can start men to shouting or shooting.

Still further beyond our usual understanding of ourselves is the fact that we can be trained to show quick irritability not only as a spontaneous response to special words but also as a continuous, characteristic attitude toward life in general.

By his own estimation, no person who has acquired this high temper is ever *overly* hot-headed or *overly* belligerent. He explains persuasively the great provocation upon this occasion. He will explain equally persuasively about the

next occasion; and the occasions twenty years from now. Eventually he may be telling his friends, who probably will not believe him, how impossible it is to live with a woman of his fourth wife's disposition. Moods do their greatest harm in marriage, friendship, and in close contacts in business or professional life—the relationships that should give us the most permanent satisfactions.

Of all the moods that sway us, violent temper and high excitement alone seem to me to serve little useful purpose. Enthusiasm, for example, despite its occasional trend toward recklessness, is plainly a motive force behind action—in addition to being a quality nearly everyone finds attractive in others. Pessimism, with all its faults, has the virtue of checking excessive exuberance and causing dissatisfaction with failures. So with our other emotional swings, except temper and excitement.

Temper and excitement mean little else than erratic action, nearly always unwise. Even their apparent service to a few famous orchestra and stage directors, army officers, and other personages is questionable. Insofar as these picturesque individualists *really* become temperish and excited in the pyrotechnics so dear to the writers of popular biographies, they lose force and direction in the use of the abilities upon which their success actually rests. Their spurts of vitriolic comment upon a bad performance would be more effective if untinged with angry loss of self-control.

It is unlikely, in any case, that the average child will develop into such a genius that he can find patient indulgence for his outbursts—anywhere except at home. This is what makes it so unfortunate for him that he does find indulgence there. Parents will deny in all sincerity

that they tolerate bad humor. Still it remains true that tantrums are one of the most common of all faults in our children, and this would not be so if sensible discipline were enforced.

The inability to see where we fall short of our responsibility here is a little hard to understand, since the basic ideas are so easy to grasp. A father and mother whom I met at a parent-teacher lecture reflected the attitude of many who believe that they are doing everything possible.

I had reiterated the conviction that no habit pattern of any kind would persist in a child unless permitted to give satisfaction of some sort. The simple rules for fighting temper tantrums had been outlined in A.B.C. order:

- A. Do not lose your own temper.
- B. Do not make scenes continually over trivial offenses. Ignore them and smilingly use your own demonstration of interest to stir the child's interest in another activity and to shift his mood.
- C. When tantrums become a real issue, do not blink the fact—make them fail, and, if necessary, place an ample penalty upon them.

The father I mention listened with apparent interest to the résumé and was among the first to respond in the discussion period.

"My wife and I have followed all the rules," he said. "When our first child was being weaned, he started temperish crying and screaming. We refused to go near him during the tantrums. They stopped in about two weeks, and he has never given us any further worry."

"When our little girl was being weaned, the same thing began. We treated her exactly the same way, and it did not work. She is ten years old, but she still has tantrums and is moody."

Now we know that rage is one of the basic reflexes that can be aroused at birth in all children and that some are more difficult than others to cure of exaggerated anger. Admitting that, I told the father the only comment I could make on his little daughter's case was that I, personally, had never seen behavior like hers continue in the face of intelligently administered training, begun in infancy.

I suggested that there might be some looseness in discipline that he and his wife had not noticed. The mother was sure there was not. The discussion turned then to the child's conduct at school. The mother reported it was excellent—no tantrums nor moods. That statement, of course, brought up the question, "Why?"

"Oh, she learned her lesson there," the mother answered.

"Why didn't she 'learn her lesson' with you, if her teachers succeeded in showing her that temper and moodiness would not do her any good with them?"

At this point the father smiled teasingly at his wife and said, "I have my own ideas about how strict my wife can force herself to be with her only daughter." After one indignant look at her husband, the mother joined the other parents in the general laugh.

The main trouble—beside the fundamental one of the bad example of temper, excitability, and gloominess set up by many adults for children's imitation—is that most parents find explanations of all uncontrolled moods in immediate causes. "That is enough to upset anyone!" they

exclaim about some mishap that has disturbed their child. They always seek a logical, intellectual motive rather than the illogical, emotional one.

In repeated outbursts of rage or quarrelling, for instance, mothers and fathers do not visualize a threat of habit that leads on from one situation to the next. This encourages children in the widespread, self-defeating weakness of blaming the unreasonableness of others and the unfairness of the universe when they find themselves perpetually irritable and constantly bickering.

Considering that tantrums, which so obviously are unattractive, are so frequently permitted to go uncorrected, it is not surprising that the less blatant mood of pessimism is allowed to get out of hand. Its sensible treatment is complicated first by the pity that all of us feel for a child who seems unusually sensitive.

Unhappiness, however, is a special type of sensitiveness, to which we are prone to be especially sympathetic. In many homes it elicits positive approval, implied if not openly expressed. Mothers and fathers—and teachers, too, sometimes—surround it with a poetic atmosphere, the aura that they imagine as clinging to the tender souls of literature and art.

The unpoetic reality is that a marked depressive attitude helps neither poet nor prize-fighter, and its growth is cultivated in the most commonplace ways imaginable. This is a sample of the many ordinary methods by which it gains power: A baby pouts and whimpers because he is unhappy about something. He is picked up and fondled. The unhappiness gives place to pleasure. The baby is put down. The pleasure switches quickly to unhappiness

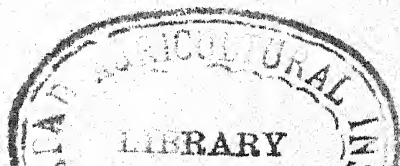
again, and the baby cries. Mother sings a funny song, or father turns a funny somersault to make him laugh.

Little incidents like that, repeated often enough, will associate gloominess directly, in the child's automatic reflexes, with the pleasure that results from his gloom. Gloomy behavior will continue to carry some burden of pain, of course, but it will be a pain linked spontaneously with a kind of satisfaction. No longer is the child unhappy only about something special. He now can be unhappy "over nothing."

He has been provided with a positive, unnatural, "gloom-to-happiness" highway in his reflexes. Unless that pattern is broken up in some way, he will be a cry-baby all his life; and after he has passed his teens, few will be willing to sing lullabies or turn somersaults just to make him cheerful. He may never understand why his life is so sad; or if he becomes aware of the futility of his bids for special tenderness, he may not have the organized strength of character to overcome the long-established habit.

He could have been taught control in childhood by enforcement of the same general principles we use in combatting the more temporary emotion of rage—by a shift of mood away from tearfulness and petulance into play and work; by our strict refusal to comfort baseless, uncontrolled unhappiness; by a demonstration of our strong disapproval of depression; and by our withdrawal of all displays of our affection until the child is behaving with normal optimism. Finally, if this denial of all rewards for unhappiness is not enough, we must resort to some kind of penalty.

These rules, wisely applied in childhood, would create a generation of men and women in whom the enthusiasm



and energy released for activities that bring lasting satisfaction would be beyond the furthest reach of the average person today. Practically everyone is so badly trained that he has to plod through "blue days"; many of us through "blue weeks." While we are feeling this way, it is extremely hard to be swift and sure, and we may give up utterly.

Pessimistic moods are harmful in exact proportion to the degree in which they become automatic. This cannot be emphasized too strongly, because we rarely realize how far they progress beyond control in the best of men.

When we find work easy today after being so arduous yesterday, it almost never occurs to us that the difference may not be in the work, but in a mood; a mood that yesterday defied our intentional direction to some extent. We complain that "everything has gone wrong," but the basic reason for the succession of annoyances and disappointments is that we ourselves have gone wrong.

The handicap is serious enough when confined to short periods. If it colors a whole life—as it often does—it is one of the worst possible drags. Still its first stages usually seem trivial and inevitable to easy-going parents—"only" spells of moping, complaining, and crying; "only" prolonged disheartenment over every disappointment; "only" inability to summon much enthusiasm about anything.

Best results will come through recognizing all disproportions in various traits separately, and by dealing with problems as they arise. None of us should forget, nevertheless, that no one is ruled exclusively by a single characteristic. We may know that a certain girl's greatest danger is her tendency toward habitual depression, and still see that she

has periods of high temper, daydreaming, and excitability marked enough to demand attention.

Most of us are inclined either to be blissfully unobservant of the excesses in a child's mood swings and emotional habits or to react excitedly to them in a manner that will reward the excesses. From many examples that beckon to me, let me cite a Sunday-morning episode.

The minute the father stopped the car in which he, his wife, and I had returned from an errand, we heard the sobs of their eleven-year-old daughter. She was running from the rock garden to meet us. She threw herself into her mother's arms, clutching her, and weeping unrestrainedly. It was apparent at once that the child had suffered no grave injury, but the most casual glance showed that her dress had. It was daubed from top to bottom with blue enamel.

The mother immediately became tense. "What is the matter?" she pleaded. Interestingly enough, the girl stopped to hear every remark her mother made, but her response was redoubled sobbing, which increased the mother's anxiety. At last I led the child aside and asked her calmly what was wrong, in a tone that implied an answer was expected.

She stopped crying long enough to say, "I painted the box blue!" For further explanations, we took her back to the garden, where she had been playing while Richard, the butler, tried his hand at outdoor work. There she told us the whole story. A paint brush, a can of expensive enamel that her father had been treasuring, a discarded garden box whose rotting wood invited brightening—a surge of overenthusiasm,

In another child this exuberance, in itself, might have been laughable, an incident of a fine spring day; but this girl has long shown an increasing tendency to such spurts. They constantly get her into tangles. One of her chief devices for evading the consequences is to hide in deep unhappiness—as many men and women do habitually when faced with the penalties of unrestrained recklessness.

“Didn’t Richard tell you not to paint that old box with father’s enamel?” the mother asked.

“No,” the girl sobbed. (The hurt look and murmured protest of Richard, a faithful servant for many years, indicated that a touch of lying had entered here.)

What did the mother and father do?

Nothing.

What should they have done? First, place a reasonable penalty upon the lack of control in their child’s enthusiasm—this was not a first offense. I believe at least a part repayment from the girl’s allowance for the \$3 worth of wasted enamel and the ruined dress would have been one sensible way to call her attention to the cost of her characteristic thoughtlessness.

Her excessive, unrestrained unhappiness over her mistakes also should have been discouraged strongly. We may suspect that it is partly insincere at present, a trick to avoid punishment. However, it is becoming a spontaneous reaction to all difficulties. Every time it serves her purpose, the automatic pattern will be further beyond her control. Exaggerated weeping or protracted gloom over unwise acts when she is grown will not help her with her associates. It will be only one more fault they will check against her.

The punishment I should have urged would have been

one that can be applied successfully either to temper tantrums, overexcitability, or excessive unhappiness. That is isolation. It would have been explained, too, of course, that lying was included as part of the bad conduct that was being corrected.

I hardly hope to persuade the more thoughtlessly tender-hearted parents to treat excessive unhappiness as bad behavior, which deserves wise punishment, and like any other harmful conduct can be corrected by it. To those who are thoughtful in their sympathies, I can give the assurance of experience that dejection will fade if it always brings the child an order to go to his room and remain there alone until he can be cheerful.

Undue pessimism in childhood will not exist long without its rewards. The child should learn the precept, "Weep, and you weep alone." In a child known to be physically well, prolonged, *dry-eyed* gloominess also should bring prompt isolation.

Under no conditions would I spank an unhappy, over-excited, or enraged child. In addition to the increased unhappiness and excitement from physical punishment, the part played in these moods by dramatization must always be taken into account. The price some children will pay for the center of the stage is enormous.

One little girl carried on a tantrum for three hours, accepting spanking from her mother at intervals throughout the period without being conquered. The tantrums disappeared after one successful isolation, successful because she was unable to attract the slightest attention through the closed door until she announced that she was willing to behave.

The one possibility of failure in this method with an

extraordinarily high-tempered and badly trained child may be mentioned here. It is that the child has learned the trick of breaking things. If parents could stand the wear and tear on their dispositions and the household goods, I feel sure that they could win even with such a tartar by continuing the banishment long enough. I shall never put my notion to a practical test, because this ranting is bad for the child as well as the bric-a-brac. It enables him to dramatize and build up anger.

For the correction of detrimental moods, furniture-breaking youngsters should be wrapped and pinned in several layers of blankets and left severely alone until their excitement passes—as it will do soon when the child realizes his parents are in earnest about the penalty. This remedy is recommended for extreme cases of habitual gloominess that have gone beyond other controls. I call attention to the fact, because I well know such stern treatment for unhappiness may seem out of the question to some of the very parents whose children are in need of the strongest help available.

DAYDREAMS AND FAIRY TALES HAVE THEIR USES

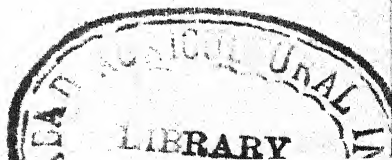
A NORMALLY CHEERFUL outlook—far removed from foolish, unjustified optimism—implies, above all, the ability to evaluate and face facts as they are.

Occasionally the facts may be disheartening; but the person to whom everything looks black for frequent, prolonged periods is not seeing reality in its true colors any more than the daydreamer does.

The depressed person, victim of a mood, suffers unnecessarily because of the fictitious darkness he attributes to the road ahead of him. The daydreamer, dominated by a habit of thought, paints the goals he would like to reach in hues that are unrealistically bright.

Everyone of course is justified in some daydreaming. He has to build castles in the air first before he can establish any standards for himself or translate them into solid substance. He must be lured by some enjoyment of the achievement in prospect in order to gain enough enthusiasm to start any endeavor beyond the sheerest routine. The thought of joys to come inspires him to live for the long run, not solely in daily needs or for the satisfactions of the moment.

There is no evidence to support the notion that fantasy formation is, in itself, an indication of neurotic tendencies. As with all other normally healthy psychologic patterns, its danger lies only in an excess.



Without the balancing of dreams with reality, the adult is offered two paths into which to turn. Both are thorny at the end. The first path leads more and more into fantasy. Its follower finds in rumination about imagined personal triumphs a ghostly shadow of the greater satisfactions that would come from genuine accomplishment. While a dream of success drives his companions to strive for success, he lulls himself into inactivity by gazing in rapt imagination upon a fantastic preview of himself as a suddenly acknowledged hero, applauded for his brilliance.

To the extent to which the dream, without the realization, becomes enough for him, his natural craving for action is dulled. He may reach the point at which his most outstanding characteristic can be described by Dryden's line, "I think and think on things impossible, yet love to wander in that golden maze." Or he may become like the lonely father in Conrad's "Tomorrow" who so many years nursed the hope that his runaway son would return, setting the time as "soon" at first, and finally fixing it always as the very next day.

When the embodiment of his dream comes to such a man—fully grown, calling out to him *today*—he may refuse to accept it. This cannot be his dream child. His dream child is much more charming; and besides, it is not even scheduled to arrive—until tomorrow.

The path traveled by the dreamer who does not yield to inactivity presents such a discrepancy between the horizon, as he himself paints it, and the view immediately at hand that he is sure to be unnecessarily discouraged. He tends to sink glumly into the conviction that the only satisfaction he can expect is in trudging along as courageously as possible, taking life as it comes in the "daily

grind." He closes his eyes deliberately upon the vision and the hope of any greater happiness. He forces himself into work, dreary and uninspired.

A social system finds less and less use for such acquiescent drudges as it moves toward greater leisure and less routine. Even when the world can use them still, no one wants his child to be so used.

There would not be so many timid "escapists" today, nor so many who labor under the illusions of sour, so-called realistic disillusionment if the elders of yesterday had done everything in their power for their children.

A close watch will disclose the proportion of time given to rumination and the extent to which daydreams are taking the place of purposeful action. Prolonged listless idleness is the principal clue. Thumb sucking also is an indication in some cases, in fact this is the only psychologically serious aspect of the habit, which generally is deplored on the relatively less important grounds that it is not pretty.

The results of not bothering to find out how far children are straying into fantasy and to correct the drift usually are not obvious, even in later life, to the unobservant. To them the handicaps of their daughters and sons often seem quite normal, "just what you expect in young people of this modern age."

A father and mother whose son, in his early twenties, I once tried to help get a job are distressingly close to being typical. The father reported that the son was eager to work and was delighted with my idea of sending him to see the head of a large corporation who had promised to place him where he could learn manufacturing.

When the lad arrived at the corporation office, he made it clear at once that he was looking for no mere factory

job. He would be content only with "something demanding ideas"—in aviation. Yet he had such hazy ideas of the practical problems of aviation that the president of an aviation company who tried to find a niche for him as a favor to my friend said the boy could not have qualified for the lowliest beginner's work if he had been willing to "stoop" to it.

"This modern age" undoubtedly supplies more training for the quick-and-easy-success obsession than the rail-splitting period did. Still the final basis for the fault is not in our social and economic background, but in our homes. Consider the childhood of the young man just described. Apparently he has not changed so much as his parents had led me to believe in the years since I often visited them.

He was four or five years old then; rather shy, silent, noticeably inclined to physical idleness, but active mentally. His father delighted in drawing from him tales of his imaginary playmates and later the stories of his elaborate world of make-believe. There were subterranean palaces, connected by jewel-studded tunnels through which the boy rode in golden Rolls Royces. The father was slightly disturbed by lengths to which this went, but not disturbed enough to try consistently to change it. Not so the mother: she openly resented any suggestion that her son be forced into more concrete habits of thought.

Is it not in line with his training that he now is seeking a wingless victory of his own golden, jewel-studded imagining?

The same unquestionable charm of childish make-believe that enchanted those parents is ruling the mother of a constant little dreamer and fanciful yarn-spinner of six

years whose most recent adventure was brought to my attention as this chapter is being written.

Arms extended, making a humming sound with his lips, it seems he scampered down his school's broad stairs, and straight through the glass of a window. When teachers had disentangled him from the bushes that luckily cushioned his landing, he explained: "I forgot the window. I was an airplane."

Another inglorious high flyer in the making! His mother's comment on this mishap—as upon his *continual* tall-story telling—was: "I am glad he has imagination, and I would not think of crushing it."

She should be glad, and it should not be crushed. Still it would be well to recognize that one of the strongest encouragements to overindulgence in fantasy is the adult attention it commands. It would behoove her, too, not to trust to accidental bumps to keep her son aware of transparent facts. In all likelihood there will not be fortunate cushions handy every time he sails through realities after he is grown.

Make-believe is fine only as long as it is held to the level of a game. The minute a child becomes serious about it, the bubble should be punctured. This can be done in a way that will not discourage further use of imagination. The method of the father in the following story can be varied to suit the occasion.

As he should have been, he was talking and playing one night with his three-year-old daughter when she announced solemnly, "Kitty Mouser is knocking, Daddy."

As he opened the door and bowed in the imaginary visitor it occurred to him that this fabulous cat, first encountered in a children's story, had been dropping in

rather frequently of late. His daughter's eyes were shining just a little too much, he feared. He decided it was time to bring her back to earth.

"Kitty Mouser says she wants to go for a walk tonight," the father remarked, "instead of just sitting in her chair. You take her left paw, 'Dee Dee,' I'll take the right one."

"Dee Dee" looked less credulous by the moment as she grasped at vacancy and strolled around the room. In a few minutes she suggested that Kitty Mouser was tired. Her father assured her that Kitty Mouser had just said she wanted to walk for an hour, at least. A few minutes more and "Dee Dee" exclaimed with sudden conviction:

"There isn't any Kitty Mouser!"

"Of course not," said the father.

"It was fun to play anyway. Wasn't it Daddy?"

"Lots of fun," replied the father, "—to play."

The circumstance that "Dee Dee" first met Kitty Mouser in a fanciful story probably will bring to the minds of many readers a training question that has been much debated. That is, "Should a child be allowed to hear or read fairy stories of any kind?" In my opinion there has been too much fuss about this comparatively simple matter.

A good fairy story stimulates the imagination. Virtue triumphs in it and bad behavior fails inevitably, as they do in real life often enough to make the lesson a valuable one for children to absorb. I believe, further, that there is little foundation for the dismay of some students of the problem over the ruthlessness and other abstruse psychology horrors they find in fairy tales, the rhymes of childhood, and even good old *Alice in Wonderland*.

The common-sense plan is to let the child have his fairy stories, his nursery rhymes, and songs, but never allow

him to forget that they are only pleasant foolery after all.

The task of parent, teacher, and nurse is to make the developing child use imagination consistently as a spur to ambitious action. While he is growing up, they should encourage him to enjoy *moderately* his talk about adventures and plans, seeing to it that he connects his big ideas with some immediate accomplishment, at least a step toward the visioned goal. Early training in work habits and active, purposeful play provide the foundation.

To this should be added extra activities when there is a tendency toward daydreaming. The generally wise prescription of an hour a day alone to promote self-reliance should not be applied to dreamy youngsters. They should be almost constantly with companions who will stimulate them to do things. A full and busy day should be demanded.

The boy who chatters about wanting to be a painter should be put to work on some phase of drawing or painting suitable to his abilities. The girl who says she pines to be a writer, should be forced to get busy on some composition. That plan would give the world better painters and writers and more efficient and happier people. Another blessing, we would not have to listen to the talk of so many who mistily want to be painters, writers, or other fine workers, but do not want to paint, write, or do any work.

The qualities we exercise most are invariably the ones that gain strength in us. We can constantly practice temper and excitability, and become increasingly temperish and excitable in consequence. We can practice unrestrained gloominess, and become more and more gloomy. We can give sway to dreaminess, and increase the sway

of dreaminess over us. Or we can keep those qualities in their place, in order to bring forth our best personal endowments.

Every year in which we postpone the display of these best gifts lessens our store of them. Remember Ulric Brendel in *Rosmersholm*? He sat upon his treasure chest through all his young manhood. He was waiting for the most propitious day to open it. In his youth he had seen the great wealth it contained. When, at last, he opened the lid, there was nothing left of all the riches that had once been his.

*FROM SUCH COMES THE KINGDOM
OF LIARS*

THE STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS with which boys and girls are equipped when they begin life is so direct that it is embarrassing upon occasion. Out of the mouths of babes come unadorned facts as, "Father says the reason mother is so fat is that she always eats too much." Disturbing socially, of course: morally admirable.

While we are helping with the tightening of the tongue that is necessary for the comfort of all concerned, how can we be so clumsy that we crush the candor? Worse still, how can we be so careless that we train such a child into active dishonesty?

It cannot be because we seriously question the value of honesty in promoting the child's interests. Even as we smile at wise saws, like "Fools and children will tell the truth," we realize that defeat is nearly always the penalty for habitual shiftiness. "You can't believe a word she says." "I wouldn't trust him with a nickel." We hear the barricades going up, often against people who cannot understand why they are comparatively friendless and why they fail in so many things that they try to do.

How did they get this handicap?

Partly from the example of their mothers and fathers or of others with whom they were associated in childhood.

Partly because they were actually rewarded as children for little dishonesties resorted to tentatively in the natural effort to squirm out of unpleasant situations.

Partly because thoughtless parents, teachers, or nurses forced unnecessary temptations upon them and actually penalized them for being straightforward.

Partly because whatever training against dishonesty they happened to receive was not supplemented by deliberately planned training for positive, active honesty.

Honest parents do not invariably have honest children; but on the average a child adopts the level to which he becomes accustomed. After he hears his father and mother lying brazenly and repeatedly to dodge social engagements they find unattractive or to wiggle through other annoyances, it is not surprising that he will lie to avoid his own difficulties.

If occasions arise in which we feel that we must resort to lies or evasive half-truths, they should be hidden from our children. When this is impossible, our reasons for apparent dishonesty should be made clear—an exceedingly difficult task with a young child.

Submit identical questions of truth or falsity to fully mature persons—for example, to the teller of a white lie and the person it affects—and it usually is impossible for them to agree where white becomes black. It is apparent that such puzzles will be a tax upon immature minds, trying to get their bearings through cross currents with which they are still unfamiliar.

To a girl of five years, a broken dish may bring as hard a pull upon the compass as her mother experiences when facing a traffic judge for unlawful parking. Tact, consist-

ent interest, expressive understanding, and the ability to look upon untoward events in fair perspective are required if we want to be sure to retain intact and reinforce the inborn honesty of our children. They have to use the trial-and-error method in making adjustments to the world. Errors must be met with sympathetic patience; which by no means implies that they should go without correction.

Fathers and mothers to whom children feel free to go openly with troubles have made an excellent beginning. This beginning should be made before a child starts to school.

In early childhood in the home, where most activities are known, an opportunity exists that will never come again. There is relatively little chance or need for secretiveness then, and in most children there is relatively little tendency toward it. I say relatively little, because nearly all children can be expected to conceal some things from the ages of three or four onward—hitting their playmates in quarrels, sex curiosity and sex play, or any conduct that they sense is under strong disapproval.

The arrival of school days abruptly increases both the opportunities for deception and the temptation to deceit. With less supervision of every little act and less support from the family, the child meets harder tasks and invidious comparisons with others besides his brothers and sisters. Pride, defense, and some sense of inadequacy usually are stirred.

A very wise teacher can use these impulses to promote honesty and other personality assets: pride in integrity instead of in craftiness, defense and a feeling of adequacy through courageous facing of trying situations. Teachers who are very wise in the psychologic training of children

still are rare, although more intelligent thought is given to the problem in the average school than in the average home. The least a parent should do is to deliver to the teacher a child who has not already been twisted out of his natural straightness.

The high rewards that parents give their girls and boys for dishonesty and the definite penalties placed upon honesty contribute strongly to the twists from which so many grown persons suffer. The statement is sadly true—most true for the parents who are blind to the proof of it under their eyes.

This is another indication of the extent to which we are swayed by emotions when we deal with those whom we love and are most eager to help. Our harmful clumsiness is hidden from us under our tangles of annoyance, our slightly warped personal values, and our eagerness to believe in our own flesh and blood.

Without a journey back into the maze of still earlier contributory incidents, let us trace a more or less routine series of events in an upper-class American home. Let us notice how these comparatively uncomplicated happenings are complicated by relations between the parents, by parental biases, by concern for the child, by unthinking loyalty to him, and by ready suspicion of other children.

The father began the story by grumbling to me that his wife's irritability was spoiling his week-end. He said it was all because he told her it was not fair to lock their small son in his room so long for a lie about riding his tricycle in the street.

The mother, it developed, was on edge with anxiety about the boy's persistence in playing in the dangerous suburban speedway. This probably explained the lapse

into oversevere punishment, which was so uncharacteristic of her. It emerged also from the father's own story that his charge that his wife was unjust in her punishment of the boy was made in the presence of the other children. He smilingly admitted, too, that he had lost his temper and had decorated his statement with a few picturesque words generally frowned upon at polite dinner tables. What else was behind the anger that led the mother to hold stubbornly to an excessive penalty?

"I know why you are sitting there with a grin on your face," my friend the father said to me good humoredly; "but Martha is entirely mistaken when she believes I encourage the boy in dishonesty. The time you happened to be at the house was an exception. I just had to laugh because his story that the puppy probably had carried off my missing golf balls was so foxy and he told it so solemnly. I am as worried as Martha when he really lies. All I say is that I do not think it hurts anyone to be slick enough to get by in a pinch."

"Well, Martha is right in her notion that he has a flying start in slickness," I remarked. "If he develops into such a chronic liar that he cannot 'get by' any place, remember how cute you thought it was when he was four and one-half years old."

"While we are on the subject, what about the time you caught him pulling up flowers after you had been suspecting the boy next door for weeks? Since you had no proof, you were right in accepting your boy's story that he had not touched them before. Still, you took a chance on making him feel pretty smart in a lie when you kept on ranting against the neighbor boy."

"Why shouldn't I?" the father demanded. "That kid

east of us is always up to something. I wouldn't put it past him to pull up the flowers."

"I shouldn't put it past any active, mischievous child," I murmured; "not even my own."

So it goes. In other homes the rewards for dishonesty, the penalties on honesty, the bad example, the parental emotions and biases differ in details.

Shift the scene. In this household on our right we see a mother flatly refuse to doubt her daughter's denial that she hit a playmate in the face with a jumping rope. Although the red mark shows and five children assert that they saw the girl do it, she is rewarded by her mother's partisan support. The emotions that confuse this mother are love, loyalty, perhaps prejudice against the neighbors, instead of panic because her child insists upon playing in the street. The injustice here is uncorrected lying, instead of oversevere punishment. All the same, a harmful injustice is done.

The little son in this home on our left also looks his father calmly in the eyes and assures him that he never pulled up flowers before this time when he was caught at it. He hints that the boy next door has been responsible for the trouble in the past. This father is unwise in a different way. He becomes so indignant because he feels sure his son is lying that he spansks him unmercifully. It would be better to drop this doubtful point non-committally and make his stands on clear-cut issues.

The parents whom we next will visit never become so enmeshed in irritation at each other that they quarrel over punishment. They are dotingly affectionate. Neither overlaxness nor overseverity of one is ever questioned by the other—not even in their private discussions, for which

all important questions of child training should be reserved.

Shift the scene again and again, and we should find the same basic theme beneath the variations—very little carefully planned training in honesty; failure to make children feel deeply that it pays; failure to instill the habitual attitudes that will fit them for a world in which shiftiness, to say nothing of outright dishonesty, is sure to be a drag.

I am talking human values, not abstractions. Every bit of training and every penalty should be examined dispassionately in relation to its usefulness for the child. Judgment is required, as well as the sympathetic understanding we already have emphasized. Angry punishment by rigid, well-meaning persons who glorify virtue—in the abstract—is one of the most fruitful sources of deceit. Terror may force a child to lie, or make him hate the truthfulness that has become associated with his fear.

Here is what happened to one boy upon whom cruelty was inflicted in the name of honesty. He was brought to me because, among other problems, he had previously been a literally fearful liar. He was six years old when I saw him, physically alert, intelligent, and charming enough to wheedle any unsuspecting person.

Three years before, his father had separated from his mother, an untruthful woman who gave the boy a bad early example. The boy had gone to live with a grandmother, who has a violent temper and possibly is ill mentally. She established a set of strict rules. In view of his mother's lying, truthfulness was placed at the top of the list.

The sternly honest but erratic grandmother soon was so exasperated by the boy's disobedience and his evasive-

ness in answering questions that she said the only way to control him was to "slap him straight on the jaw." She meant exactly that, and she did it on an average of three or four times a day. The evasiveness increased constantly. More and more frequently he tried transparent falsehoods, even though he knew he probably would be caught in them and get another hard slap. Nearly every night he whimpered, and sometimes screamed, in his sleep.

At this point those who trace all traits to inheritance may want to blame flaws in the family stock. We continue with the record.

Four months before I saw him, the boy had been taken to live with his other grandmother. She is a calm, well-balanced woman, skillful with children. She took the sensible position that if it happened to be true that the boy had inherited weaknesses, that was the more reason for patience and unusually careful training.

She told the boy at once that he need never be afraid to tell the truth; that he would not be slapped under any circumstances. When he misbehaved he was put to bed quietly and left there until he was sorry. This was an unpleasant experience, but held no terrors for him. It is significant that in the four months after fear was eliminated from his waking hours, he cried out in his sleep only three times.

In that short time, the shift in attitude toward him resulted in his voluntary truthfulness when in difficulties. Although his timid evasiveness had not disappeared entirely when I saw him, reliable accounts from all sides showed it had decreased strikingly enough to indicate what might be accomplished.

I should feel safe in saying that this boy would develop

into an actively straightforward man if it were certain that he would have training throughout his childhood as intelligent and consistent as that given him by his sensible grandmother. His family situation being what it is, we cannot be sure. Good influences cannot accomplish much unless they are maintained continuously.

I wish it were possible to make this necessity of *continuous*, consistent training clear to fathers and mothers in whose conduct toward their children from one day to the next there is almost as great a difference as between the dispositions of those two grandmothers. There is a vast number of these parents who swing with their moods between too easy condonement and frightening severity.

Their recurring laxity suggests to their children that it may be safe to take a chance on an impulse to do forbidden things. The ever-present possibility of unjust punishment discourages frank, voluntary confidence, and makes dishonesty tempting. When the children happen to be caught in disobedience, they know from past experience that the threatened hot-headed penalty probably will not come at all if some way can be found to delay it until the mood of their emotionally uncontrolled parents shifts. Under these conditions, it is understandable why a child will try any trickery that may prevent a scene at the critical moment.

HONESTY CAN BE MADE ATTRACTIVE

OVERSEVERE PARENTS and the ones who are easy-going and fiery by turns are not the only ones who provide our youngest generation with special inducements to shiftiness. Those who demand a confession when a child's error is already beyond question also do their share, although they include many who try earnestly to be both fair and consistent. They believe that character is strengthened by squeezing the bitter truth from an offender on every possible occasion. They are wrong.

When truth can be taken for granted, it is much better to take it for granted than to go out of our way to connect it with bitterness. There will be enough times when we really are forced to inquire into misbehavior without deliberately digging needless pitfalls.

Under the best of conditions it is no small accomplishment to keep the issue of frank truthfulness divorced from penalties. Untrustworthiness, like other harmful habits, generally is entangled with related shortcomings. If, as frequently happens, fibs are resorted to in an effort to hide earlier mistakes, it should be emphasized to the child that any punishment decided upon is not only for the original misbehavior, but also for the dishonesty.

In the opposite situation, a child who openly confesses a fault or makes a straightforward statement of the facts upon request should not go unrewarded. As to the first

misstep that is not willful, I believe it would be wise to say, "That was wrong and must not happen again. This time it is all right because you have been honest and are sorry."

But after all, the classic anecdote does not have it that George Washington chopped down the whole cherry orchard directly against specific orders, nor that he returned to his chopping immediately after he successfully pleaded guilty. Our general rule certainly should not be followed to an extreme which suggests that truth is so rare a jewel that repeated, willful disobedience will always get off lightly if the facts are flashed boldly in mother's face. Admission of faults, when that seems most expedient, is often used interchangeably with lies by a child who has every intention of further disobedience as soon as punishment is evaded. Such confessions are patently dishonest.

Among the youngsters who, at tender ages, have become post-graduates in this art with highest dishonors, I remember best a doll-like girl of three and one-half whom I encountered in a Middle Western nursery school. Her wide blue eyes looked as innocent as a cherub's, but they could calculate the odds in a crisis. She called them to the assistance of her sweet little mouth in speaking whatever seemed safest—the most outlandish lies or the most outlandish acknowledgments of stubborn misbehavior.

Blandly, she would deny the evidence of a teacher's own eyes. Had she been seen breaking a bottle against the wall of the school garage, running the risk of cutting herself or the other children? Impossible! She had not been near the garage because teacher herself had said not to play there!

Had she picked tulips again from the school garden

after she promised on each of the five previous occasions that she would leave them for all the children to enjoy? This time her face might shine with conscious righteousness and she would say firmly, "Yes, I did it. I knew it was naughty, and I'll not do it any more." That was almost word for word what she had said before—except at the times when she denied that she had even so much as touched the tulips.

The teacher in charge never knew what the child would do next, and she was baffled as to what she and her staff should do. With the co-operation of the mother, herself a successful schoolteacher, the nursery school before I visited it had tried depriving the child of special privileges and shutting her in a room alone—where she occupied her leisure pleasantly by breaking things. As a last resort, the school had used spanking. All showed no results.

On an easily understood issue—a self-satisfied confession and plainly insincere expression of regret after she had pushed another little girl into the mud twice—we wrapped the child in blankets for 15 minutes. She wept a little, but came out friendly, calm, and smiling. It seems that she came out unimpressed also, because it was on the next day that she flatly denied she had crashed the bottle against the garage wall.

The blanket-wrapping was extended to half-hour periods. The child was wrapped five or six times in all. Her ingratiating cleverness still was summoned to the rescue at first in sparring to avoid the punishment. Once she asked with utmost politeness while a teacher was preparing the blankets, "Do you need a pin?"

"Goodbye," she called sweetly from her bundle as the teacher left the room.

In the midst of another sentence to the blankets, she complimented a teacher profusely on her pretty dress. Again she wrapped a protesting little dog in a blanket, explaining, "He picked flowers, and he is going to stay here until he remembers not to do it!" *

The first improvement in truthfulness and in her general behavior came on occasions when she knew she was in sight of one of the teachers. At those times, she did not demand from the other children what was rightfully hers, and the head of the school wrote that she was puzzled as to whether this submission to adult authority might not force the underhandedness we were trying to cure. "Will the inner impulse toward spontaneous right behavior come later?" she asked. I gave her the opinion that it would.

After the half-dozen wrappings, the question, "Are you going to force us to wrap you again?" was enough to insure the child's outward truthfulness and to stop disobedience. A few months of this, and she was habitually and willingly straightforward in her statements. Her better adjustment to her playmates and to the school life has heightened her self-confidence and her animated charm. The constructive frankness that the regime of discipline

* In an entirely different category from *deliberate* dishonesty are the fantasies children enjoy in games or in making up stories of fictitious adventures. This exercise of childhood's bubbling imagination should be treated as daydreaming—it should be held under control and turned to good account as a stimulant to real achievement. In direct connection with training for honesty, it is sufficient to add that prolonged indulgence in fantasies, left uncontrolled, may lead to adult untrustworthiness. One of the most constant liars I ever met was a man who had been allowed to build without restraint in childhood an exaggerated need to embellish all the duller realities of his life. His incredible yarns about escapades and narrow escapes and his pretense to wealth he did not have embarrassed and alienated his friends.

has implanted provides a wholesome outlet for her cleverness and other attractive qualities that she formerly employed as aids to her trickiness.

A child is no more a natural liar because his imagination and lack of experience make it hard for him to distinguish between reality and fantasy than he is a natural thief because he has vague ideas in the beginning about what belongs to him and what does not. In both cases it is failure to control and correct the mistakes that does the harm, not the first little mistakes themselves.

A girl of six years recently visited an aunt, exhibited a handful of money, and proudly announced that she got it from her mother's dresser drawer. The same girl brought home a silver bracelet from kindergarten and showed it to her mother with the explanation that she found it in the schoolroom and hid it in her pocket. It is obvious from her actions that she is not aware at present of doing anything discreditable. She would be aware of it in two or three years if this were allowed to continue. By that time she would be concealing her thefts and finds from her family.

The mother is to be congratulated upon her successful cultivation in the child of the feeling that she should confide freely in the adults around her. As long as the child is open and has not violated a learned distinction there is no cause for alarm.

There is cause for immediate training and for careful explanations as to who owns what. Any recurrence of thefts after the explanations should bring some penalty as a reminder, and the penalties should be increased with every additional display of the tendency until it disappears.

For basic instruction upon the standards of ownership

that the world enforces, I should start from the time a child can talk with a rule that he should invariably ask his playmates whether he can use their toys instead of just picking them up on whim. Even at home he should always request permission to take anything that does not belong to him. It will help also to set aside a shelf, box, or drawer for a child's own things, with which he can be generous because he understands that these things belong to him. (The politeness and neatness that will be encouraged by these simple rules will be valuable special dividends added to the respect for property rights.)

Parents who do their best, thoughtfully, intelligently, and constantly, from the start, can depend upon the ultimate result. Still they should be prepared for some shocks along the way. When the shocks come, I urge all parents to keep their heads, as I urged the mother who consulted me in tears because her adored son—never before dishonest to her knowledge in all his twelve years—had lied for weeks about the price of his music lessons and had spent the difference.

The boy was broken-hearted over the incident. It was getting out of all reasonable proportion both for him and for his parents. We decided that the penalty he already had paid in his own feelings for this single, uncharacteristic slip had been enough. Then we began quietly—as all parents and teachers should do in similar cases—to seek the underlying causes.

We learned that his principal motive had been a desire to treat friends to candy, soft drinks, and movies. His parents explained to him that this was a praiseworthy impulse; nothing to hide if kept within his means. They showed him how to budget his allowance and eliminate a

few things he had been buying for himself so that he would have money left for a moderate amount of treating.

We might have found that the special cause was a hidden bill for an accidentally broken window, dues to a forbidden boys' club, or any of a number of familiar temptations. It is possible that in some cases the fault could have been traced to an embarrassingly small allowance. In the prosperous homes of present-day America, however, it is more likely that an allowance entirely too generous would have been at the bottom of the trouble.

I can assure affluent and indulgent fathers and mothers that there is danger when they give a child much more money than his associates have. It encourages showy spending and a consequent craving for more and more money. I have known it to lead to secret excursions to the family cash drawer or to checks forged in a parent's name. Such snobbishly-inspired dishonesty is about as common as that which sometimes results among children of the poor who see others with so many things that they are denied. It commands less sympathy.

Once the special reasons for thefts or lies in any particular instance are sifted to the surface, re-education, explanations, and retraining should be carried through along the lines suggested by the underlying causes.

Penalties there must be for repeated errors, proportionate to the degree in which these personally destructive tendencies seem to be becoming habitual. Whatever happens, a child should never be given the idea that his parents doubt his essential integrity. Nothing can be more discouraging to honesty. How can a child believe in himself if he feels that his mother and father do not believe in him? They should show him that this fault must be

removed because it is sure to injure him. At the same time he should be convinced that they know beyond question that he is excellent, sound material. All normal children are: the outcome depends upon those who guide them.

Back of all these suggestions and back of every other move we can make looms the importance of home and school morale. We could accomplish marvels if we could not only eliminate all unwittingly harmful examples by adults but also could go one step further and create in all homes and all schools a *positive* code of *active* straightforwardness.

As persons seriously interested in smoothing the paths ahead of our children, we should do well to hide our smiles at the "honor of dear alma mater" style of stories. Under the fustian is a truth as applicable today as it was when the ink was sticky on the first issue of "The Youth's Companion." Whole nations and races are influenced noticeably by the codes they hold up to their young. The force of codes of honor when concentrated upon small groups is no fiction. The reality can be seen clearly in homes and schools where they have been given active life and color. Yes, there are some.

Talk to youngsters—no matter how modern or sophisticated—and you will see how they respond to the ideals of their group. The dominant ideals are not always good for them, of course, but they respond just the same.

I listened for instance, to an account of a typical, healthy boy's experience in a fashionable preparatory school where it was regarded as priggish not to cheat for grades. The consequence was that practically every boy in the school prided himself on ability in that field. My friend did not



need help, I know. When I asked him how he got along there, he explained with some pleasure that he was popular, partly because he was good at supplying translations and in sneaking correct answers to others in tests. His pleasure is excusable. Who wants to be a prig?

He left that school later and went to another. There he found, to his surprise at first, that the acceptance or the offer of illicit help in class work meant being branded by the other boys as a cheat. In some way—through cultivation by the teachers probably, possibly through the accidental influence of a few leading boys—this exceptionally high standard has been given real force.

"It's the squarest bunch I ever saw," my friend said with evident pride in his association with it.

Now no one who knows human nature would believe that the rather startling experience of looking briefly upon classmates with an active sense of honor would place every boy instantly above all dishonesty forever. I would be willing, however, to leave to any conscientious parent or teacher the answer to this question:

"Would a boy who attended the first school all through his childhood have as good a chance to develop straightforward dependability as a boy would have who attended the second one throughout the same critical period?"

This does not suggest constant nagging and preaching, which will disgust and estrange children. It suggests an early unstilted, reasonably dramatic statement of their code by parents and teachers. It means quiet recognition, not overapplause, for children when they do an especially straightforward or honest thing. It means that the earliest tendencies to stray must be nipped.

While we least suspect it, children are learning from

casual remarks, from tones of voice, facial expressions, and habitual attitudes what ideals really interest most deeply the adults whom they admire. So, the creation of a code that will have power means that we ourselves must have an *active* conviction that positive honesty is worth having.

We are deceived about life if we do not think so—and we will deceive our children.

TIMIDITY—OUR GREAT INHIBITOR

AS WE see ourselves and others temporarily or permanently timid and frightened out of the fullest use of our abilities by any number of harmless things, it is hard to realize that human babies are among the bravest of creatures. If it had not been proved, it would seem to be beyond belief that when we came into the world only loud noises and a feeling that we were about to fall were capable of terrifying us. We would not have been afraid of a snake nor a lion, although a baby snake or a baby lion might have been frightened by a glimpse of our shadows.

Wild animals, living precariously, may need to increase their supply of primary alarms that nature leaves out of the make-up of human beings; but your little girl is not helped by the installation of the habit that many grown women have of shaking in every limb at the sight of a mouse. The baby, who flinches neither at total darkness nor a flash of lightning, is ill served by building up the familiar adult terror of unlighted rooms and of every little storm.

Something has gone decidedly wrong in training when the normal infant, who would meet all the Presidents, Kings, and Dictators in his diaper without a tremor, develops into a man who quakes inwardly at the prospect of being introduced to any amiable stranger.

Scantly equipped as they are in natural terrors, our children have to learn what to be afraid of. We do a

hit-and-miss job in teaching them. It just happens that we hit upon a potentially useful trait if the baby, through a singed finger, comes to dread the fire, of which he is not in the least afraid at birth. An opportunity to prevent the growth of a handicap is woefully missed if, for example, we allow the burnt child to dread the motor car because he had the passing misfortune of touching a hot cigarette lighter in one.

A prime cause of our actual cultivation of irrational fearfulness and timidity is that they are among the unwholesome emotional attitudes that most quickly arouse unthinking pity in parents. In their sympathy for a child who seems so helpless against his fright, parents jump to the belief that he was born timid, high-strung, or backward; and should be protected.

This had been the belief in the home of a frightfully timid boy of three and one-half years, who finally became so outstandingly courageous in every way that it was no surprise to his parents when he once asked to go right back to his swimming after such a narrow escape from drowning that they quaked at the thought of it. His earlier terror of most familiar objects and situations (combined with the general lack of training it induced) had so far restricted his activities that his family had believed him to be mentally and nervously defective.

His mother, although she is an intelligent woman, had fed his cowardice by sheltering him in it as if it had been a rational avoidance of actual risks, instead of simply a bad habit. Understandably enough, but with no real understanding of the problem, she had poured sympathy upon him for what she considered his natural sensitiveness.

Parents, nurses, and educators will recognize in the symptoms that this case presented the problems they have to meet again and again in less exaggerated forms in the children under their charge. The outcome shows what can be accomplished by aggressive work, against fears far worse and more complex than average.

This child had reached a point at which he would not enter any room in his home, except his own bedroom and the dining room. Even when children with whom he wanted to play were in other rooms, he shrieked if an attempt was made to coax him through the doors. He would not sleep without a light, a timidity that troubles many children of three and one-half years, or twenty-one years and upward. It is no heavy burden in itself perhaps, but often it is a symbol of really cramping faint-heartedness in all life situations. This boy's bedroom lamp had to be draped with special cloths; his hand had to be held as he was going to sleep; his toys had to be placed in a certain order.

The effects of this glorification of timidity soon became evident in his other habits. He could not feed himself, nor dress himself, and he refused to eat anything except babyish food. His nurse was so stupidly indulgent that if he had wanted to he could not have learned self-reliance. In that environment he would never have wanted to, although all sensibly treated babies do.

In one month this problem was well on the way to solution. A graduate nurse who had experience in correcting difficulties in children replaced the pampering one, and took complete control. The mother and father agreed to keep their hands off completely. They were convinced at last that the child, without being aware of it, had

exaggerated his terrors and was constantly adding new ones to gain the attention and sympathy they could not force themselves to conceal.

The new nurse began by establishing comradeship through play and by informal conversations in which the absence of danger was mentioned casually. Her own manner suggested security and calm courage—an essential in all relations with timid children because fear is highly contagious, as crowd panics prove.

Then, without any further preliminary except a brief and quietly-spoken assurance that no harm would come, bedroom lights were turned out. There was no more hand-holding at bedtime. The boy was forced to go into every room into which he had occasion to go. A normal routine for a normal child of three and one-half years was outlined, and the nurse put it through strictly. To build general confidence and health during our forthright attack on the entrenched fearfulness, the child was forced to feed himself and to eat all the foods prescribed for him.

For a few days there were the expected flurries of struggle—crying, for instance, when the boy was gently but unquibblingly pushed into a room of which he was afraid. The shrieking terror that had mounted steadily when it brought him results in previous lukewarm efforts of his parents and the indulgent nurse to wheedle him through dreaded doorways quickly faded out after these displays brought him no reward. His horror of the rooms rapidly disappeared under the influence of his pleasure in playing in them.

His fears were treated as if they did not exist, and all indications of them actually ceased to exist. Wails brought no one scurrying to his bedside, and the wails

gradually stopped. His fear of the dark vanished, having nothing to feed it. The transformation into his present bravery came without the least resentment against the new nurse. On the contrary, he developed an immediate affection for her.

The fact that an increase in the boy's happiness and self-expression began to be evident at once, and has continued, is the best common-sense answer to any suggestion that this decisive repression of dangerous habits could damage his personality. Certainly it would have been better if the boy had not been allowed to learn to be afraid in the first place; if he had retained undimmed the courage that is the normal birthright of all babies.

The most constructive move we can make against unnatural fears is to prevent a baby from ever acquiring them. We should base training from the beginning upon the truth that the network of irrational, useless alarms in which grown persons are enmeshed begins to be woven in infancy. It starts with the simple, basic fears of loud noises and falls, and those alone. All avoidance reactions—except natural jerking back at the instant of actual contact with painful objects—are also implanted and cultivated by training.

Simple, enlightened explanations are the ones to seek. It is so silly and so obstructive to intelligent training to believe such old wives' tales as that babies have instinctive terror of furry animals inherited from cave men. That myth has been repeated for centuries, and probably will be repeated for centuries more; but all well-informed parents should know by now that John Watson put it to the test and found that babies are not naturally a bit afraid of furry

animals. He showed how they can easily be *trained* to be afraid of all furry animals. This happens if the babies are startled by a loud noise or by loss of balance as they follow their natural impulse to reach happily for the animals.

These same infants also carried over their artificially created timidity to things remotely resembling fur, including the beard of a jolly impersonator of good old St. Nicholas. They feared beardless persons, too, and inanimate objects that had become associated with their original fright.

Unless such fears are trained out, they persist long after the fear of noises and marked fear of falling that created them have faded. A big child who has learned to tumble without crying and to delight in noise, may howl when picked up by a department store Santa Claus. No mystery there: the whole range of unreasonable fears is like that.

Little incidents that we hardly notice can make our child timid and cowardly before he is a year old. If we let him be timid and cowardly until he is fifteen, he will keep finding new things to be afraid of, and it will be impossible for him to be really and fundamentally courageous after he is grown.

Elementary precautions against startling night noises are enough. It is bad training to tiptoe about the house and to stop all social activities there to avoid waking a baby. If reasonably quiet parties are given as usual, an infant will never learn to be unduly disturbed by them. Most enlightened parents now are familiar with the sound rule that if a baby is wakened and calls or cries they should not respond, but many cannot find it in their hearts to enforce the rule. If from the very start we implant the

habit of going back to sleep quietly, instead of the habit of being upset when wakened, our children will be saved sleepless hours when they need rest in adulthood.

Here are a few additional hints:

A young baby should not be shifted into positions that make him feel that he may fall.

No one should be permitted to jump at him and shout "Boo!" if it is easy to see that he is not amused but frightened.

He should not be pushed about playfully, nor should bedclothes on which he is lying be jerked in a way that will throw him off balance.

A dog who leaps upon an infant too young to balance himself solidly may also set off fears, especially if the dog barks at the time his pushes are threatening the baby with a fall.

Unless it is trained into him, in one way or another, a child will continue to be as unafraid of the dark as he was on the day he was born. We should never begin leaving the lights on and the doors open to the bedroom used by our child, except when illness makes it necessary. We should never begin holding a baby's hand at bedtime, nor any other fear-suggestive fuss, such as whispering, "Don't be afraid; mother is right here."

The first time a baby shows that he does not want to be left alone he may be feeling some little fright that will pass quickly if we do not emphasize it by oversolicitude. On the other hand, what we think is fear may not really be fear at all. It may be an attitude hit upon by sheerest accident, and continued only because our response brings gratification.

WE CAN BUILD A BRAVER WORLD

ONCE LET yourself start to run when you feel shivers going up your back on a dark street, and it will be hard to stop. If you were a young child it naturally would be still easier for you to go on from there into a panic.

The boy who acts as if he is afraid today when he is not much frightened, if any, may be really fearful tomorrow. Not only do we tremble because we are terrified but also we become more terrified because we tremble. Fear breeds fear and timidity breeds timidity, as inevitably as courage breeds courage and self-confidence.

The babying of children, which is so common in our present age of comparatively effortless living, tends to undermine self-reliance by whetting the appetite for more coddling; and yet extreme severity is equally bad. Angry and violent punishment frightens some girls and boys so that their spirit is permanently cowed. We can be thankful for the parents who are steering a steady middle course between indulgence and overstrictness.

If a child wants to do things that are foolhardy, they should be forbidden with an explanation as honest as we would expect from our own friendly advisors. It is easy, for example, to instill by strict orders—and penalties if necessary—an entirely reasonable avoidance of stray dogs and strangers on the street without teaching children to be afraid of all dogs and all strangers everywhere. Truthful

warnings are good enough. Threats of hobgoblins and other nonexistent dangers always take some toll of courage.

A friend of mine tells me that when he was a little boy an aunt with whom he spent a vacation found him sliding down the rail of her high Colonial staircase and was afraid he would fall. She pointed to an attic door above the stairs and said, "Old Pat lives up there and he will grab you."

"She repeated that," he says, "every time she caught me sliding down that fascinating rail. Before I wore through my trousers, she wore through my resistance completely. I was terrified by stairways throughout my childhood; and still feel uneasy on strange ones."

Strive as we will, we cannot prevent little incidents of everyday life that may implant later fears or timidity in the presence of certain persons, objects, or situations. When such reactions appear, we should launch a counterattack immediately. Being created by accidental training, these handicaps can be dispelled by planned training.

A mild fright may be overcome merely by attracting a child's attention to something else. If the fright does not pass when ignored, an explanation in reassuring tones may allay it, as, "That is only rain hitting the window. Come, I'll show you." The explanation should not be overstressed or it may dramatize the fear, or the child's feeling of being a center of interest because he is afraid. If those efforts fail, an expression of strong disapproval may succeed—not ridicule. We should center the penalty of our dislike upon the timidity, reserving our approval and all other rewards for the return of normal courage.

Some fears may be too severe at their very inception to be checked so easily. The baby boy (previously men-

tioned briefly) who became abjectly terrified of birds and bird cages after an exceptionally hard fall with his canary in its cage could never have been cured by ignoring his fright and suggesting other interests. Neither would explanations have done much good. We are dealing with an emotion here, not with logic. This child continued to think and talk reasonably enough about the "nice bird" when it was out of his sight. Strong new emotional associations had to be set up to counteract his strong, unreasonable *feeling*.

It was done in this way. The boy was given his meals in the corner of the room where the fall occurred—the parents had noticed he was shunning it. The bird cage was placed at a distance, and at each meal it was moved slightly closer. At last he ate with the cage beside him. From then on he was as delighted to be near his canary and other birds and bird cages as he had ever been.

Familiar wrong ways of handling that situation would have been to give the baby candy, or to cuddle him while easing him closer to the cage. Both those methods would have built undesirable habits. Crying from fear could readily have become associated with extra favors. Using solely the normal feeding time did not encourage any bad habits.

Suppose his parents had found no clue to explain his dread of birds. Their plan still would have worked; against that or any other dread of the same intensity. It would even cure a nephew's sudden aversion to a visiting aunt who rushes forward shrieking, in her newest Paris-model hat, when her baby nephew falls out of a chair.

The spread of childish timidity from a simple beginning is the danger we should fight. Complications begin so

casually that they escape notice. The less dramatic outbreaks often become the most harmful in the end because they are more likely to go uncorrected. Always there is the tendency of parents to slide along under the mistaken impression that fearfulness is only natural and will correct itself.

In the presence of a timid child I have heard parents say, "He has an instinctive horror of that," or this, or the other—all of which he will have to face in life, either hampered by his special horrors or freed from them. He will have to be freed by wisely directed training; unless his parents are willing to take the chance that purely accidental training by experiences that happen to come his way later will reshape the emotional bias he has acquired.

From a fright in one room, to a dread of that room, to a dread of all unfamiliar rooms! From the crash of a minor traffic accident while riding in a bus, to a fear of the bus conductor and bus drivers as well, to a fear of all men in uniforms, to a fear of being taken into any public place, to a marked diffidence in meeting strangers—so a child's timidity and cowardice can mount and ramify. Long-continued fear of specific things can become just an undefined pervading fearfulness of possible dangers that is as acute as if the worst actuality were already being faced.

Obviously, such culminations are not reached in one leap. They require many repetitions of fearful behavior to strengthen the original pattern. There will be also the gradual addition of the new objects of fright, and at last the gradual seeping of vague, haunting timidity into nearly all activities.

Usually it is sheer good fortune—like the blotting out of

a bus fright by the pleasure of riding—that provides the interruptions to fear habits in childhood. A few mothers and fathers (may their tribe increase) take the trouble to supplement these chance influences.

Here is an uncomplicated example of how timidity grows, and how it can be stopped: The little girl involved had always been allowed to sleep in a lighted room because she was afraid of the dark. Her mother considered her naturally sensitive and treated her accordingly in all ways. The child's fear increased, as might have been expected. At the age of ten, she developed attacks of extreme terror in the night.

Physical examination showed she was well. Her emotional state was reflected at once in slower school work. That, in turn, affected her liking for school. Upset in her studies and in class, she could have gone on to timidity with her classmates—and on into other spirals with which those who know children's difficulties are familiar.

Be assured that the child was not pretending. Her fear was real and poignant. Its earliest beginnings went so far back into her infancy that she could not possibly have found words to explain it. She probably knew no words when it began. Bright as she was, she could not have realized that a desire to bask in her mother's companionship had any part in making her fright constantly stronger and more complex. The way she was cured is evidence that this was true, nevertheless.

All that was done was to stop the satisfactions that came from the fears. The child, who already had received ample comforting explanations in vain, was told briefly again that she was in no danger and that she would have to handle her alarm from then on by herself, with all lights

out. On that night, of all nights, the boiler in the heating plant ran dry. The banging in the pipes until dawn sounded like imps in armor. With the program announced definitely, the mother did not permit its initial trial to end in compromise. She told the trembling child what was causing the din, then summoned her own courage to the test of walking out of the room and shutting the door.

It took three more nights, with quiet restored in the house, before a check became noticeable in the girl's terror. No matter how late she remained awake and no matter how much she wept, she was given no evidence of the sympathy that was felt for her. On the fifth night she went to sleep at 9 o'clock, and after that was not troubled with wakefulness. For a week she showed signs (which we pretended not to notice) of hating the coming of darkness. Then all her fear of it dropped out.

Three years later she was teasingly unsympathetic toward a younger sister who began to be a little afraid of the dark. When her mother remarked that there had been a time when she was terrified without a light she was plainly surprised, and had difficulty in remembering anything about it.

It sounds too good to be true that all fears can be cured by a substitution of more wholesome interests or by the rigid denial of special rewards. It is too good to be true. Some terrors will yield only to stronger measures. To them I would attach a penalty more positive than a mere statement of parental disapproval. I anticipate the cries of indignation from many sides:

"Place a positive penalty on a child because he is afraid!"

"Yes," I say unhesitatingly, "if you must do it to cure

the child of chronic fearfulness that is far more damaging conduct than upsetting an ink bottle."

If it is impossible to separate the various motives behind this behavior that is clearly destructive to personality, hit at the entire manifestation. The most imperative step is prompt corrective action, rather than baffled puzzling over the exact reasons why the child has become such a problem. You can be sure in any case that fears will not be found unmixed with other factors—such as tantrums.

I shall deliberately cite a rather extreme case to remove all doubts as to the extent to which I would go in situations that demand the strongest measures. This was an unusually attractive girl of two and one-half years with an excellent health record. She had been so well behaved that friends of her parents pointed to her as an example for their children. A little more than a week before I first saw her, this model baby, who never before had questioned going to bed and had always gone promptly to sleep, began to scream one night with apparent terror.

Although I suspect that spoiling during a dangerously severe cold had been a contributory influence, I could never learn exactly what caused this outburst. I say so frankly because I believe, with others, that psychiatry is not helped by fostering impressions of an omniscience that psychiatry possesses no more than any other branch of medicine.

The nursemaid solved the issue temporarily the first night by a spanking. The second night the parents wisely decided to let the child scream it out alone; but when it became evident that she could not get a response, she discovered the trick of climbing over the high railing

around her little bed, and ran, screaming, to her parents. She was spanked and put back to bed; climbed out at once; and continued screaming.

The reasonable concern of her parents over this racing about barefooted in her nightgown so soon after her recovery from her dangerous cold, prevented more prolonged or rigid enforcement of their plan to leave her alone. The best of parents are confronted with dilemmas like that; and the best of young children are quick to seize an advantage, without knowing exactly what circumstances presented the advantage to them.

This child kept calling for "the sunshine," and a light was turned on. Still she screamed. She was taken to bed with an older sister, and later with her father. It was after this failed that the family became convinced that something more than fear was involved. Her fits of screaming had spread into the days by now.

"I try to be good," she said over and over; "but I can't. I just cry and cry."

The anxiety in the family can be imagined. She could not have failed to sense it, even when she was trying to be good, so far as the *deliberate* intentions of her essentially sweet disposition went.

After 11 days of such events, the parents called for help. That night, the minute she began to scream, the girl was rolled and pinned tightly in blankets from chin to toes. She screamed for 50 minutes as measured by the clock—her sympathetic grandmother said it was nearer 50 hours. Then she became quiet and self-possessed. She was released, and went soundly to sleep. At 4 o'clock in the morning she awoke and started to scream. The nurse promptly wrapped her again, but the child screamed for

30 minutes more before she dropped to sleep. She was freed at once, barely awakening during the unrolling, and slept on normally until daytime.

The second night she once more began to scream as soon as she was put to bed. She was wrapped immediately. This time it took only 15 minutes before she asked to be unbound, promising to go to sleep. She did go to sleep quickly. The third night she fell asleep without wrapping as soon as she went to bed, and she slept well all night. The next day she was calm and happy for the first time since her screaming began. She was fond of the nurse who wrapped her and showed no trace of intimidation nor resentment because she was wrapped. She has had no return of the screaming or sleeplessness.

Whatever started it, I am convinced that this issue could have been met in three nights at the beginning, instead of subjecting the child to two weeks of loss of sleep and steadily rising emotional tension. If there should be another crisis of extremely harmful behavior of any kind, the parents will know what to do.

The most valuable point is that at the impressionable age of two and a half this girl has been shown that loss of self-control—through fearfulness, overexcitement, tantrum, or any other cause—means undramatic defeat. The lesson should be reinforced, if that ever becomes necessary. It may save her suffering in womanhood.

Those who have been permitted to reach the age of 15 with a timid or fearful attitude have to cultivate a working substitute for the deep, underlying confidence and courage that should have been trained into them earlier. They can learn to recognize their inclination to be timid and to compensate for it. Doing things with a bold front will

enable them to gain intellectual mastery over their emotional flaw. Even for the courageous a bold front is useful. It is the custom of many daring acrobats who slip as they practice a trick to go through with the trick again instantly. They do not want to let apprehension ever go unconquered.

I do not mean to suggest that calamity flows inevitably from every childish fright when I mention that chronic fearfulness contributes its part to other harmful traits aside from fear itself. The shaming of a timid child, for instance, in which playmates are likely to indulge, tends to promote a feeling of general inferiority.

Parents certainly should never shame a child who lacks confidence. In showing their firm dislike of timidity, they should not say, "You should be disgusted with yourself for being such a coward." Instead, they should seize every opportunity for positive, confidence-building training; say, "Mother is proud to see you so brave," whenever the over-cautious youngster shows signs of courage.

Without laboring to extend the list of other faults encouraged by fearfulness, it is evident that shy evasiveness must be included. Saying "Mother told me not to play in these clothes," is a tempting way for a child to dodge a game that requires venturousness. One little lie and one game avoided present no tragedy; but the games a few weeks from then will be just a little more alarming because the other children have added to their skill and courage in the meantime, while our child stood on the side lines.

To forestall the arrival of a day when fools will rush in where our "angel" fears to tread, we must see that he uses actively and early his ability to work and play. The man who has stood on the side lines habitually throughout

childhood is more prone than others to remain on the side lines all through life—a carrier of bats and a retriever of foul balls for men no better at the start than he could have been.

Against all the virtues that we can instill, exaggerated timidity can rise as a negation. It forces a retreat from life. It causes a hurtful turning back into our personalities of the wholesome energies we are eager to spend. We need that spending. It is the only kind I can think of that always increases the original supply.

The solid meaning of life, William James remarked, "is always the same eternal thing—the marriage, namely, of some ideal with some courage and endurance."

The timid man may elaborate the explanations with which he tries to solace himself. He may say that he does not care a whit for achievement of any kind; not in business, nor in popularity with friends, nor in arts, nor in letters. He may decide that the whole show is tinsel, masking emptiness, but he cannot deceive the really observant. He has a basic shortcoming that smothers his outgoing, creative impulse and makes for frustration.

He is afraid.

THE "INSIDE" STORY OF ATTRACTIVENESS

THERE USED to be a notion that only very haughty aristocrats and uncultured boors ever behaved with disdain for the feelings of others. In our time rudeness promises to be included among the privileges that are spreading to the great middle class.

It might seem strange at first glance that this is so. Thoughtfulness in our relations with those around us is one of the principal elements of personal attractiveness, and there probably never was an era that sought personal attractiveness so openly and avidly as ours. Our pursuit of it—a virtue I believe—is recognized as one of our outstanding interests by the discerning men and women who write advertising:

"Here are motor cars for excellent transportation, plus a conveyance that makes the owner and his family colorful in the eyes of all beholders."

"This soap is for cleanliness, plus social popularity."

"Be interesting!" "Be captivating!"; hint the announcements of the university extension course, and the parfumeur.

Why do we not put more stress upon the charm of considerateness when we are so frankly eager to be attractive? Principally, as I see it, because of the exalted place we give now to unintimidated *self*-expression by children. It is a

fine thing, too, this promotion of children's rights. My question is whether a little more elevation of courtesy in our training will not assist our children in expressing themselves. Their efforts to have their say will have to be made in a world that generally opens its doors to pleasant behavior and slams them on rudeness.

We must be careful not to go at this backwards. We do not want superficial manners just for manner's sake. We do not want a ponderous imitation "charm" that is entirely on the outside of its wearer, weighing him down like the encrusted monograms that clanked on the watch chains of upstanding gentlemen of the nineties. Dr. Winifred E. Bain of Teachers College, Columbia University, undoubtedly had this in mind when writing in *Parents Look at Modern Education*:

"And again, a child might be better off at home than in a (nursery) school where all his thinking is done for him, or where he is forced to learn such social usages as 'thank you,' 'excuse me,' and 'if you please' until he becomes worried, confused, and frustrated." *

How fortunate it is that there are ways to train a child to use such simple remarks as "thank you," "excuse me," and "if you please" without confusion and frustration! They may be "the old oil," in the opinion of some of our most unattractive, modernistic brats, but their lubricating power is such a help. Our kind of politeness would be an integral, well assimilated part of boys and girls. It would arise from habitual thoughtfulness in all their dealings with their associates.

The beginning is on the inside. Modern educators de-

* From "Parents Look at Modern Education," by Dr. Winifred Bain, by permission of D. Appleton-Century Company, publishers.

serve credit for calling attention to that. An outside finish, which also is eminently desirable, can be applied successfully provided the basic material is not too flimsy to take a finish. When we start looking for this basic material, we are led into the whole background of what is popularly and inaccurately called "personality."

This mistaken notion confuses personality with lure or glamour—charm in its restricted definition. Inborn endowment undoubtedly has a good deal to do with this type of colorful appeal. Yet women and men who happen to be especially blessed with it by nature are unlikely to achieve lives of enduring personal satisfaction unless they acquire some measure of solid, authentic personality to support it.

On the other hand, those who are not especially blessed with magnetic charm can add greatly to their attractiveness if they acquire the substantial capabilities, justified self-confidence, and other personality traits that enable them to make the most of their gifts. Many of the most popular and admired men and women are not charming in the physically magnetic sense of the term.

The problem is hopeless if we think of all attractiveness as a magic entity, handed in one bundle to certain fortunate babies. There is an assured opportunity, however, for the child who does not seem to be born with extraordinary charm if his parents realize that likability is not magic but is largely a combination of understandable, trainable habits that create a generally happy emotional outlook and well-directed self-control. Each habit system demands guidance. All are intricately interlaced. A shortcoming in one may become a drag upon the cultivation of another.

At the outset, let us say, there may be lack of confidence. It is one of the failings that may make a child shy. Shyness keeps him from being well liked. His unpopularity works back in turn against his self-confidence; and the resulting increase in timidity robs him of still more friends.

This is the reverse side of the statement that genuine attractiveness is more than skin deep. The kind that is merely surface adornment or a lucky gift would have no more direct connection with a serious discussion of psychology training than cosmetics or diamond heirlooms would have.

Unselfishness ranks high in the fundamental, underlying habits directly associated with attractiveness. A selfish point of view will be recognized more quickly by associates and resented more hotly than any other fault. For a selfish reason, if for nothing else, we should foster our children's unselfishness. The only way they can command *continued* generous treatment from others is to have the capacity to give to others.

Generosity does not develop untaught, although the teaching often results from such luck as sharing clothes and toys or taking care of smaller brothers and sisters in families in which money is not plentiful. Love of self, a powerful factor all through life, is particularly strong in childhood.

When selfishness begins to mar a child, the parents' first responsibility is to seek the causes. Possibly the child has been allowed to wander into daydreaming and introspection until he is not fully aware of other people and their wants. More likely, he has been so spoiled that it never occurs to him that his associates' desires are worth consideration. Perhaps he has had to struggle so hard against

dominating and selfish playmates that most of his energy goes to grabbing and holding.

There may be a great variety of causes that invite correction—more activity for the daydreamer, less indulgence for the spoiled child, protection from the domineering playmates; whatever the situation requires.

After the ground is cleared the parents' next thought should be that practice makes perfect in generosity just as in selfishness and every other habit. The ungenerous youngster's practice of selfishness should be stopped and the practice of generosity encouraged in its stead. A thread of acts that seem trivial gradually becomes woven more and more tightly into the habitual personality patterns.

Let us assume, since we do not have to prove it, that mothers and fathers who are distressed by their children's selfishness never hold up the model of being selfish themselves. Then all that remains is to spin the thread of daily acts. This, like work training, was easier in the days of plentiful chores and larger families; but it still can be done.

An occasional flat suggestion to a self-centered youngster that he lend some of his toys to a friend will not be amiss. The issuance of the invitation will be a wholesome experience for the boy who never thought of such thoughtfulness before. Then this unwonted burst of big-heartedness may well bring a return suggestion from the toy borrower that his benefactor is welcome to the joy of sticking a finger into the cage of the toy borrower's snapping turtle. Kindness usually brings quick returns, and a succession of pleasantly rewarding incidents soon can change a child's whole outlook.

Long-standing trouble with a girl who showed no trace of generous impulses was solved by a game her parents called "Turns and Halves." Her brother always was entitled to his turn at toys. He was expected to get his half of any candy or cookies. The mother kept a score—

"Home run" for the girl because she voluntarily offered half her chocolate Easter egg to her brother. "Home run" for the boy when he eagerly invited his sister for an ice cream soda instead of spending on himself all the quarter his grandmother gave him. Girl "out at first base"; although she offered her brother his turn in the swing, she had to be urged, and did it sourly.

Once in a while the mother awarded a ten-cent-store prize for the winner of a "series." The little presents were extras, never definitely promised. There were no bribes for good behavior. A few months of this game started the girl away from selfishness toward generosity.

Of all the good advice handed to me as I was entering the practice of medicine, I am reminded oftenest of a remark delivered with characteristic wit by a Kansas City pioneer in scientific medicine in whose biochemical laboratory I had the good fortune to work during school vacations.

"It's fine to know about all these extraordinary ailments," he chuckled after playfully quizzing me on some fine points of comparatively rare maladies, "but always remember this when you are making a diagnosis—the commonest diseases are the commonest diseases."

The commonest causes of distress are the commonest in psychiatry as well as in bodily ills. If a child seems unhappy, may it not be because he is friendless? Why doesn't he, or a grown person, for that matter, have

friends? On the face of it, at least, there is nothing obscure. With few exceptions, it is because he does not act friendly.

"A man that hath friends," the Proverbs stated centuries ago, "must shew himself friendly."

In the background, of course, there may be less obvious factors that we must not overlook. The child's unfriendly actions may spring from the fact that he has not learned to play well. They may come from uneven development; intellectual tardiness that causes him to be put upon by more rapidly maturing associates or, at the other extreme, an intellectual precocity that throws him into unfair competition with children who are further advanced physically and emotionally. Again his unfriendliness may be a consequence of constant entertainment by his family, so that he feels no need for outsiders.

We must try to discover and set right the many possible underlying maladjustments; yet in most cases our treatment should be centered, with direct and uncomplicated common sense, upon the habit of acting in an unfriendly manner. Such actions bring snubs and emotional hurts that eventually will sink deep into the personality.

Although a liking for others seems to be "born in" most girls and boys, and may be so strong that precautions are necessary to prevent too much scattering of energies in sociable activities, we cannot take native friendliness for granted in all children. Nearly all have a trace of shyness and diffidence, and in many timidity is distressingly developed. They may find it hard to meet strangers.

Even when acquaintance has put them more at their ease, their friendliness may be only a response to the friendliness of others, not a positive and active outgoing-

ness on their own part. By the time they start to school, they can be so thoroughly trained in unfriendly actions that they make few friends. On into their later years rolls the snowball of shy withdrawal, constantly gathering force and size as it rolls along.

Parents should prevent the chill central core of this emotional isolation from forming and gathering volume. As a good start, they should reinstate a fine old custom that largely has fallen into disuse. It again should become the rule to introduce children to adult guests, whom they should learn to greet with a suitable approximation of the pleasure shown over a stray cat that turns up in the back yard. The fact that the stray cat may be more exciting should not cause us to neglect this opportunity for sustained practice in outgoing interest in human beings.

A word of caution: after a few remarks appropriate to young ladies and gentlemen (quaint old terms, suggesting a half-forgotten past!), the children should take their leave. It bores guests to listen to prattle from, and about, other people's youngsters—which nearly always flows when young children are permitted long stays in adult gatherings. Worse still, prolonged stays tempt children to show off, a fault that is as bad as shyness itself and frequently is an offshoot of shyness.

Friendly mothers and fathers have a better than average chance of rearing a friendly child. They provide a model and usually sense that friendliness is a good thing to teach. Still the mere friendliness of parents is not a guarantee. In fact, the outgoing parent may be handicapped in one particular. Exhibit A—the mother whose strong sociability impells her to leap in and do the friendly thing *for* her child.

"We are very glad Mrs. Throckmorton came to see us; aren't we, Gladys?"

A doubtful "Uh huh" from Gladys and an embarrassed twisting of her dress. This is almost as harmful as the old-fashioned "has the cat got your tongue" system in enhancing the silence and self-consciousness of an aloof child.

In all pity, we know that the strain a child endures in meeting grown persons is not entirely his fault. Many adults seem to suffer a complete intellectual collapse when trying to make conversation with a young child.

"What is your last name?" an old friend of the family earnestly asks. "Do you like your little puppy?" may be a second attempt.

The bright lad knows full well that mother will (and should) show disapproval if he replies, "You know my name, stupid; and why shouldn't I like my puppy."

Continued contacts with others, in which a child has an opportunity to express himself *naturally*, without noticeable pushing, will conquer aloofness in time. Efforts to draw the child into the conversation should be concealed adroitly. Transparent attempts—"Please tell Mrs. Jones about your new coaster. Please! She is just dying to hear!"—give a shy child the satisfaction of compelling attention by remaining mum. The reward, in other words, is for an unfriendly attitude rather than an outgoing one.

I stroll back through my memories of unattractive children I have met. We note in passing a family of nice-looking girls and boys who are as "fresh" as spring onions. The father and mother have an unusual fondness and sympathy for people, and have a large circle of devoted friends. Part of their sociability is expressed in good-natured banter. Their children have picked up the trick

of smart chatter but have none of the underlying kindness and interest in others that make their parents' cleverness pleasing.

We hardly need to take a second look as we hasten past this egotistical little girl whose mother brags before her, to anyone who can be buttonholed, about the cunning things the child says and does. Surely the reason for that child's unattractiveness is not obscure enough to require close examination.

Nor do we have to search far to see why this habitually gloomy boy, this habitually high-strung girl, and this habitually helpless and inefficient one are not very likable.

Let us take this aggressively ill-mannered, grimacing, fidgeting boy of nine years. (I imagine I hear a slangy chorus of his parents' friends saying, "Take him, and welcome!") He always has had a slight tendency to be self-centered and willful. The older members of his family try to break him of it by teasing him constantly and laughing when he flashes back at them. Naturally, in self-defense he steadily increases his belligerence.

He braces himself insolently for battle as I approach. "Why that scowl?" I ask. "I wanted to ask about the badminton court your father built for you." I sit down beside him with a friendliness that implies he will not be teased and that I will listen to what he says.

Instantly his behavior shifts. In a sociable, quiet, polite way, with no unpleasant grinning and restlessness, he reveals an exceptional range of active interests. All that he needs to free his likableness from its ugly wrappings is disapproval of his bad manners, a release from teasing, and a reward for the likableness instead of for his temper.



The value of friendliness and play among children themselves is not so likely to be overlooked by present-day parents as children's contacts with adults are. Still there are many who fall short in this also; who allow their children to be friendly with other children, or not, and to play, or not, according to their fancy.

Nothing can supplant participation in games in teaching a child to be outgoing, to express himself spontaneously, to like company, to have fun, to lose cheerfully, to consider the rights of others; and to develop inner confidence. The more a child pulls back from playing games with other children, the more he should be pushed into games.

Once a child is launched in sociability, repeated suggestions are needed to keep him going. They should be based upon close observation of the child's tendencies, and should be thoughtful rather than nagging. The right word at the right time can have great effect.

I asked a friend (whose unfailing consideration of others is one of the main sources of her attractiveness) if she could remember any of the childhood training that encouraged her in this.

"When I was about six years old," she said, "I came home from my first party bubbling with excitement and rattled off to my father an account of the fine time I had had. He heard me through; then asked a single question:

"Did all the other girls and boys have a good time?"

"He waited for an answer—and I did not know the answer. The best I could do was a rather weak, 'I guess they did.'

"You might notice next time," he said. 'Maybe you can help some of them enjoy themselves.'

"That gentle hint, I realize now, was typical of his con-

tinuous, quiet insistence that I should be interested in others and considerate of them."

Practically all training in outgoing conduct can be accomplished by such gentle pushes toward the practice of it. I believe, nevertheless, that there are cases when it is necessary to use penalties to force children into the practice. This applies to those who show *positive* unfriendliness, selfishness, or sullenness as very early traits. They will not always respond to the mild encouragements that will suffice for children in whom the faults are only negative—merely a lack of experience in outgoingness. In every case, parents should insist upon friendly actions and passable manners, and should do their children the favor of using punishment if all other plans fail.

When people announce that they do not like our children, we cannot depend upon the presence of a sympathetic friend who will explain, "He does not mean to be rude. He acts that way because he is timid." Or, "She does not intend to be sullen. She looks that way when she is happiest." Explanations and apologies—especially those of the "exactly-the-opposite-of-what-he-seems" variety—will change few opinions, anyway.

Our children should be so well trained that they never need an excuse. In addition to providing them with a solid psychologic foundation, we should do all we can to free them from false exteriors and unpleasant surface mannerisms.

Usually "surface" mannerisms are only habits, but sometimes they are rooted in bodily structure. The hook-up of facial muscles and nerves, for example, makes it a little more difficult for some to smile and look interested than it is for others. Nevertheless, the freeing of facial expression

can be taught to young children by urging them to smile freely and to show interest.

This sounds like a simple direction for releasing likableness. When it is considered that a change in voice modulation—to say nothing of a change of mood—is likely to accompany an effort to be cheerful, the usefulness of the training becomes more evident. The plan implies that parents and nurses will muster pleasant faces themselves to gain full advantage from their children's natural imitative impulses.

I suspect that one mother considered me somewhat heartless when I suggested a smile to her little daughter as the child was recovering from the effects of an anesthetic. It is significant that the child did smile and was made happier. She is inclined to be solemn and pessimistic, but invariably I can prevent emotional jamming by keeping my contacts with her on a light, smiling basis. Her parents allow her to present herself frequently in a most disagreeable light by neglect of this simple rule.

Among the other traits affecting attractiveness that may sometimes be traced, in part, to inborn neuromuscular differences are slowness or rapidity in speech, gracefulness or clumsiness, pleasant or unpleasant tones of voice. Here again, if it is true that there is a physical basis, it is a direct call for extra training instead of surrender.

Certain children are injured so when they are born that they suffer a form of paralysis. Often, as they grow older, they are capable of only pitifully distorted movements and unintelligible sounds. Until a few years ago, they were doomed to go through life that way; and some of them were branded as imbeciles although they had a keen intelligence that they could not express nor develop.

Now, by painstaking and prolonged training—practice, and practice, and more practice—they learn to talk, walk, work, and play. The neurologic disability they have had since birth cannot be eliminated. Their revolutionary improvement is due solely to the fact that new pathways for control of muscles have been established to enable them to overcome it.

In the face of that achievement, can any parent be reconciled to the idea that a child born with a slight tendency toward some minor unpleasant mannerism needs to carry the mannerism to his grave?

It should be noted that the suppression of mannerisms that hide fundamental attractiveness is quite different from the *assumption* of mannerisms that do not fit the basic personality.

The futility of superficial tricks of supposed charm that have no foundation can be observed in countless women, young and old, who are far from belonging among the strongly lureful ones who "stay in a man's memory if they once walked down a street." "Tisn't beauty, so to speak," Kipling explained long before Elinor Glyn and Clara Bow's press agents, "nor good talk necessarily. It's just It."

By the time a girl is fourteen years old, it generally is apparent whether she will ever have an extraordinary amount of this special glamorous appeal; and yet the mothers of daughters who obviously will have more than average difficulty in attracting men in this limited province go right on allowing them to learn to rely on the same methods that they see the exceptionally lureful girls using.

No one can blame a family for hoping that its daughters will be popular and make a creditable marriage. It is only

that this is such a silly way to attempt to realize the hopes.

Luckily, all men's tastes are not the same. The night your daughter came home from the family party at the club dance and wished in her secret thoughts that she looked like a certain famous movie actress, her wish may have been quite inappropriate to the circumstance that prompted it. Perhaps she herself, if she were freed of her affectations, is actually nearer than this actress to the marriage ideal of the young man she, and you, liked so well in your very brief meeting that evening.

Practically every woman has enough natural feminine lure to attract some desirable man if she can interest him in becoming acquainted with her; but nothing causes men to hurry away more quickly from a girl who is not strikingly charming than those same little wiles they find so engaging in the dazzling charmers.

Many emotional scars could be avoided if mothers would put a little thought on their daughter's *individual* problems instead of blindly following a routine. In young girlhood it is particularly important for those who will not be remarkably alluring to great numbers of men to be trained in a variety of interests, activities, and capabilities that will enable them to meet men as intelligent human beings, rather than solely as women.

Surely enough, the exceptionally lureful women need exactly the same background. The problem will not become painful for them until later—after the carefree days in which they have no trouble in bewitching admirers. Then they, too, must watch carefully to cultivate qualities to take the place of youthful magnetism that has gone.

It usually is useless in the long run to try to fool people into believing that we have any type of attractiveness that

we do not fundamentally possess. No matter from what angle we approach the subject, we are led back inevitably to the true, inner personality.

External graces and freedom from unpleasant mannerisms cannot give our girls and boys full value if we do not train them first to have the outgoing friendliness, good humor, healthy emotional balance, and all the other qualities that are the basic essentials of a likability that will last.

A LEASH FOR THE GREEN-EYED IMP

WHENEVER WIVES are actually free from all jealousy of their husbands, as many of them say they are, we can be safe in assuming one of two possibilities: either they know of no threat to their security in their husband's love; or they have no great love for their husbands. The same may be said of husbands who honestly are not in the least jealous of their wives.

Every normal man, woman, and child experiences some twinge of resentful feeling if another seems to be threatening to take from them something that they care for deeply. We cannot hope to eradicate this twinge, and I am not sure that we should want to. We can prevent it from growing beyond bounds. I am sure we want to do that, for uncontrolled jealousy can rack a life, and sometimes wreck it.

The only sure way to succeed in our campaign is to prevent the excesses before they gain ground—in childhood. This will not always be easy. Jealousy is a complex emotion, and training difficulties are increased because parents themselves are prone to instability in this realm. The fact that it is sometimes hard to control, emphasizes the need for controlling it.

One of the prime causes of jealousy in children, as it is in adults, is a sense that they cannot depend invariably upon affection. Although the impulse to jealousy is perfectly natural in its initial stages, its continuous arousal

throughout the years in which character is being formed gives it a disproportionate force. That is why we should be so careful not to stir it unnecessarily and certainly not to offer premiums for it.

The original stirring generally results from vacillation by parents in their personal relations with their child. The parents make the child unsure of their regard by expressing too much affection at one time and too little at another.

In some cases they indulge in excessive demonstrations at all times. This produces an exaggerated and increasing desire for the demonstrations, and ends in discontent when the child has learned to demand more show of affection than possibly can be supplied.

Occasionally the trouble may begin because a child never receives enough affection at any time; because he has a real reason to be resentful of the favoritism bestowed upon a brother or sister; or because a real or imagined inferiority makes him feel a disadvantage in comparison with others.

In addition to these stimulations, the model for excesses may be supplied by fathers and mothers in their own jealous actions.

After children have acquired the basic habit of excessive jealousy our premiums encourage them to keep on using it.

What are the premiums? There is the ill-concealed pleasure that parents feel because they believe the child's uncontrolled emotionalism proves the depth of his love. There is the unwarranted concession to the spoiled child because he goes into a furore over some perfectly justified attention given to his brother or sister. There is sympathetic notice for childish faultfinding against playmates when the complaints plainly bear the taint of envy.

Anyone with perception can expand the list of everyday incidents in which jealousy receives some parental reward, even though the reward may be mixed with a dutiful rebuke.

If I relate a story that contains a few extraordinary details, I hope that no father or mother will decide without careful consideration that the essential plot has no personal application. Training of the same general type that this girl received is quite common. The differences usually are differences of degree.

The parents were so devoted to each other that no one could be near them long without becoming aware of their intense attachment. They were proud of their inordinate jealousy, and liked to talk about it. When their youngest daughter began before she was five years old to resent any affection shown to her mother by her brother, sister, and father, this also became one of her mother's favorite topics. She told everyone that it was simply terrible how foolish over her the child and her husband were.

The girl listened to this talk with interest. Sometimes she treated visitors to demonstrations—for instance, leaps into her mother's arms as she heard the indulgent complaints about her jealousy. Nothing was done to stop the displays. They always insured a round of petting, interlarded with the mother's half-pleased comments.

The father died when the child was about nine years old. The mother was desolated. She turned strongly toward her favorite daughter's affection as part compensation for her loss. Instead of fearing the jealousy drive, she still could see it only as an evidence of the child's devotion and could not bring herself to forego the satisfaction it brought her.

Before long the mother found it almost impossible to keep up her contacts with her group of old friends. Whenever she went out in the evening or showed interest in anyone else, her daughter was torn by resentment. The mother agreed amiably with her friends that she must try to change the child. I learned later that she did not try effectively.

The girl was around sixteen years old when she was brought to me as a patient. By this time she was utterly miserable. She had too few companions, and was unable to enjoy the few she had. She was so critically sensitive as the result of her jealousy that those who were inclined to like her could not keep up the elaborate efforts necessary to please her.

Emotions so dominated her that the slightest thwarting would throw her into a rage. Scenes would follow, and then reconciliations with lavish protestations of affection for her mother or the companions with whom she had quarreled.

After prolonged treatment we have managed to teach her partly to control these raging impulses. By maintaining control, she may have a happy life. Control is all she can hope for now. It is impossible to eliminate her excessive jealousy. That has become a firmly implanted part of her disposition, and she is past the age when revolutionary, basic changes can be made.

If she had found from the age of five onward that she could not get what she wanted by being jealous, she would have stopped being excessively jealous. She would have been a woman having no exaggerated jealousy to contend with if her mother resolutely had denied the child an expression of affection at times when she exhibited jealousy.

Grown persons find it hard to quit battering their heads on the walls against which their emotions throw them. With children, our general principle always holds: no habit of behavior will continue long unless the child gains some sort of satisfaction from it.

The fact that there may be a sex tinge in jealousy should not cause us to look upon it with awe as an unsolvable mystery. The signs usually will be no more mysterious to a critically observant person than those that I had to call to the attention of the typically unobservant mother of an actively jealous girl.

The first time I saw the child, she happened to be introduced to a man who had come to visit her parents. She made a coy and self-conscious curtsy, talked to him a few minutes, and then offered to kiss him. The mother suggested that she go and play. While leaving the room the child turned to flash a flirtatious smile at her new friend.

The next day she urged her mother that she, too, should try kissing the man. Later he was at her home again, and he related the following incident: The little girl called him to the telephone in the hall. As he approached, she scampered away embarrassedly. He said, "How are you?" and immediately she ran to him and threw her arms about him ardently.

The mother suddenly remembered that this was one of a series of similarly impetuous rushes of sex-tinged affection that her daughter had experienced in her nine years. She had not thought much about it before, nor seen the possibility of its connection with the child's jealousy—about which she was worrying.

The younger sister of whom this girl already is strongly resentful is exceptionally good looking, and probably at-

tracts more notice than the older girl. That makes it the more unfortunate that this girl's use of physical responsiveness is overdeveloping her need for demonstrations of physical affection. I am sure that unless her excessive craving for these demonstrations can be curbed, her jealousy will develop into a defeating characteristic—to say nothing of the other personality dangers toward which her tendency leads.

The child's attention will not be called to our fear that she has a little too much sex interest. Such a suggestion might excite more interest and add glamour for her in her slight divergence from the norm. The tendency can be discouraged by the quiet prevention of the displays.

At the same time the parents can find unobtrusive opportunities to point out the value of reserve and dignity in making friends, and the need for restraint. Careful guidance will train the child gradually to a less active physical approach, without causing more than needed sex suppression.

In the treatment of jealousy I believe the average parents will be more confused than helped by the hints they glean from some of the popular writers on psychology that very obscure sex factors can be found in all phases of conduct. The safest rule for laymen is to deal with plainly detrimental behavior at its face value. They should direct their efforts in effective, common-sense ways, without being led far afield by the possibilities of a complexity that may or may not exist in the background.

We know there are such things as mother fixations, father fixations, and Oedipus and Electra complexes; but by and large they will not rise to trouble many parents who really conduct their children's training in a thoroughly

thoughtful manner. It is better for fathers and mothers to leave these more recondite points to the professional psychoanalysts and concentrate upon the creation of a sense of wholesome, dependable relations with their girls and boys.

This is a sensible question they should ask themselves:

"Are all members of my family showing a fair regard for one another; not overemotional nor overdemonstrative, but warm and constant?"

Against that fundamental question the special perplexities that present themselves can be tested. The so-called "problem of the second child," for example, which troubles many parents, hinges largely upon just affection in family relations.

The second child presents a really serious jealousy difficulty when the first child has been trained to expect too much attention, or when the second child's arrival centers the family's favoritism too much upon him. The mother and father should continue to guarantee to each of the children at all times the regard that is his due—no more and no less.

When one child in the family is less gifted than others—or when he himself or his parents have the feeling that he is—there is need of special effort for exact justice. Some parents will be tempted to pamper the less-favored child, and particularly to protect him in jealousy arising from his sense of inferiority. Others will tend to neglect him, while coddling the more charming one.

The less attractive child's self-confidence should be built by a constant award of his fair share, and by all other wholesome means. He should never be allowed to gain

any satisfaction from a show of resentment of another's real or fancied superiority over him.

We hear much talk about the overcultivation of a child's love by mothers and fathers as compensation for their disappointment in marriage, and of the interest of parents in each other to the exclusion of their children. A searching examination by parents as to whether they are proportioning affection wisely will assist also in these problems. To accomplish its purpose, the self-question must be really searching. Emotions are involved strongly here. It is easy to miss the truth unless we force ourselves to see it.

The essential, easily understood fact to which we should return in all puzzles is that the child's feeling of security rests chiefly upon stability and regularity in his environment.

Mothers and fathers who make sensibly directed, sensibly controlled affection the dependable, invariable regime in their homes—with the penalty of undramatic failure and more positive punishment if necessary, for all unwarranted resentment—will not rear children who are faced with a life-long struggle against consuming jealousy.

ADULTS—WEANED FROM WEAK RELIANCE

PSYCHIATRISTS, UNLIKE the average parent, have to think of a child as a person.

We cannot look upon him as a chip of the old block, and be content to let the chips fly where they may. We cannot regard him merely as *our* child, to whom we feel entitled to react this way one day, that way the next, according to the unhappiness or credit he brings to us.

The satisfaction and credit he ultimately will bring to himself is the vital concern. We cannot expect gratitude for his training as our right, until we have done something for which he should be grateful.

We do not consider him in one compartment of his environment, as some schoolteachers may be tempted to do. We have to recognize him as an adventurer in a complete social scheme of home, school, and the world in general.

We have the full measure of parental love when parents convert sentimental emotionalism about parenthood into a firm belief in their children's tremendous possibilities, and into well-directed efforts to make the possibilities come true.

Fathers and mothers with this sort of comprehending love will take time to have unstilted fun with their boys and girls; to work with them; to be interested in their interests. They will correct the outward manifestations of

handicapping traits; and also seek the underlying causes through alert, common-sense study of the child's personality.

A mother announces joyfully that her thirteen-year-old son, who had always refused to use a knife and fork properly, has been transformed into a shining light of table etiquette. The change came like a flash when the boy was smitten with the neighbor girl, who invited him to dinner. Fine! Decent table manners should have been demanded long ago by his parents; but why should the mother's tone suggest, "Thank goodness that's over and done with?"

I have seen the boy since. He still has the stubborn sullenness, of which his insistence upon sloppy eating was only an offshoot. I am afraid he always will have it. His parents are awed by their shadowy, undefined fear of "repressing" him, and have never denied him rewards for this common-place basic flaw. It remains for unsympathetic acquaintances and business associates to inflict the direct penalties later.

The father who knows his own son thoroughly is exceptionally wise, indeed a wiser father than nine out of ten. With the negligent nine must be listed this next one. After a long siege of tantrums in an older child, he was so pleased by his youngest son's freedom from temper that he did not notice that this "goodness" came from a crippling absence of initiative.

Although the boy was two and one-half years old, he would not walk without holding to someone's hand. He still wore diapers. He could not draw lines with a pencil; was distressingly shy about trying anything new; could not hold a cup nor feed himself. He was not, of course,

on easy terms with the few children he met, and of course that tended to make him increasingly bashful and diffident.

The reformation began with an uncomplicated drive at the core of his handicap. We insisted that he eat and act like other babies of two and one-half years. His mother had let him take milk from a bottle because she believed he would go hungry rather than take it otherwise. He went without milk two days before he would try to pick up a cup and drink from it—which, we had told him, was the only way he could get milk. One week of hard trying taught him to drink from a cup easily.

Attempts with knife, fork, and spoon were so clumsy at first that he had to be fed most of his solid food. He was not spoon-fed until after he had made a sincere effort to eat without help. In three days, improvement began. Two weeks later he was feeding himself entirely.

Off came the diapers. Less than a week of mild scoldings for mishaps stopped the mishaps.

He spent three days in a nursery school before he became so interested in the games that he voluntarily released the teacher's hand and joined in them. The time soon came when he burst into enraged screams and tears, and hit and kicked a child who took a crayon from him. For the only time in my life, I was much pleased by a tantrum. It was perfectly evident that this boy had been harmfully deficient in spunk. The same temper display in his tantrum-ridden older brother would have called for punishment. A simple enough difference in the needs of the two sons. The father and mother might have grasped it themselves if they had studied their children.

Every child has an inborn drive to grow up, and also a temptation to remain in pampered babyhood. Many

men and women never progress beyond dependent adolescence, emotionally. They have not been trained for self-dependence.

At the very beginning the family's baby talk sets a child apart in a special infantile world of his own—a good reason why adults should not use baby talk with children. From the time of these first baby words onward, influences may combine to keep the child a chronic leaner, if we are not careful to offset them. Learning to dress himself, for instance; to wash his face, hands, and teeth, and bathe himself, all take away a little of the notice he naturally enjoys.

Even the necessary care that follows wetting himself or the bed can become a premium. With children old enough to know better, the trouble usually has its inception in drinking too much liquid, especially near bedtime, in negligence about a toilet schedule, or in emotional tension in some cases; but its rewarding attentions encourage it. It tends to be repeated automatically—the unintentional fumbling of the child's habit reactions for the attentions the accident has brought in the past.

For the sake of completely self-reliant manhood and womanhood, we should register disapproval of all apron-string tricks just as rapidly as a child can reasonably be expected to drop them. The rebukes should never be so severe and long-sustained that they worry the child or make him tense. They should be strong enough, nevertheless, to make an impression—invariable unpleasant associations counteracting the sly pleasures of protected helplessness.

We should make the child act his age in every way possible, every day. Capabilities vary among children. I

believe an intelligent mother can best work out details of what to demand at certain ages to suit the individual child. She should definitely suggest that he attempt each specific new advance just as soon as there seems to be the remotest chance that he can accomplish it successfully. Then she should provide the positive reward of sensible praise for achievements to take the place of the insidious joys of remaining a baby.

The child has been started well on his way toward personal independence if we supply him with a framework of serviceable *automatic* habits, ranging from work interest and play habits to the habit of normally pleasant moods. In those simple but all important routines, we want him never to know the struggle of trying to force himself by a mental effort day after day into actions and emotional attitudes that clearly are to his best interests.

Into this structure we should weave *general* self-control and adaptability as we go along. We should teach the child—liberated from the bother of choices that should come spontaneously—to make and stand by *deliberate* choices for himself. We should prepare him to fit himself, intelligently, into the many different situations he will have to meet later.

General self-control cannot be made so automatic as the habits governing routine behavior. On the face of it, self-control demands a *conscious decision* between conflicting desires and a determination to follow through. The decision is called for at a moment when opposing pulls between two or more inclinations are being felt.

Such decisiveness is hard to teach, but it can be taught, and is enormously valuable. If all of us had learned in childhood to select our main direction and to hold it

through the gusts of every passing breeze, we would not be fluttering weathervanes now.

We do not have to wait for a crisis to begin the training. The choices a child has to make are not particularly significant in themselves. Yet they supply us constantly with an opportunity to implant the habitual *ability to make decisions*—a most significant accomplishment.

A little girl announces that she would like to sit at the table after dinner while her mother and father talk to their guests. Apparently remembering the last time—when she pulled over the candlestick—she suggests of her own accord that she will not touch a thing. Her mother lets her stay. Five minutes later the child's busy hands are splashing water from a finger bowl.

"Stop that!" her mother snaps, and goes on with her conversation. A moment's peace, and a finger is poked tentatively toward the enticing candlestick.

"Let that alone!" growls the father.

Fifteen minutes of this, and the mother hotly orders the child to leave the room. The child leaves, weeping more in temper than in disappointment. She has received no hint that this is a penalty for breaking her own bargain. To her it seems that she is exiled only because her parents lost their tempers—and she is not far wrong.

If they had been consistent, they would have made sure that she guaranteed to sit quietly no longer than a bundle of energy reasonably could be expected to be quiet. Then they would have sent her out of the room the instant she fell down on her decision, with a brief, good-natured explanation of why she had to go.

This not only would have helped to teach her decisiveness and perseverance but also it would have done its

bit to protect her from the human frailty of blaming unkind fate when things go wrong, instead of accepting personal responsibility.

In the same neighborhood with that little girl lives another, about nine years old, whose mother and father were afraid that she was rather slow-witted. A brief talk with her indicated that her apparent dullness came from wandering attention. She had been allowed to jump from one activity to another all her life. The result was that she had not learned anything well or cultivated any sharp interest.

Her friendliness is admirable. On a long trip, her mother says, the child became acquainted with all the children who rode in their Pullman car, and promised to write to several of them. She actually did write to them upon her own initiative. It proved what she could do when her interest held. Her mother and father never had thought of insisting on similarly intelligent perseverance about promises in which her enthusiasm lagged.

From time to time the girl had expressed a fleeting desire to learn to sew. Every day now a half-hour is set aside in which she works at it. In the first sessions she fidgetted and pleaded to be let off after a few minutes work. In less than a month she was sticking to her sewing willingly and doing it well.

Upon all things she undertakes, a comparable concentration is demanded; for example, her mother no longer permits her to ask aimless questions without paying any attention to the answers. She makes her listen. The girl had sometimes wept because she did so poorly at school. The parents now insist on more study, and she is getting better grades. She is a different girl.

This child is learning general self-control by adherence to a rather rigid schedule that has been outlined for her; but all her activities are not outlined, and all her problems are not solved. We want her to develop *general adaptability*, to find out *for herself* how to climb over obstacles. She must not become one of the countless grown persons whose lives are a series of impasses; who find hopeless objections to every possible solution to which they turn.

Children of the moderate-income group often seem to have more ability to land on their feet than the children of the rich. They have had more practice at it. Opulent parents could reap the child-training advantages of their luxurious, well-staffed establishments if they would follow two rules that should be applied in every home. First, they should outline a schedule of activities to get their child into the habit of living up to a sensible *standard* of accomplishment. Second, they should see to it that their child struggles through some of his undertakings from day to day without help, even if his methods are round-about.

HOW CAN SEX TRUTH BE KEPT TRUE?

THE MOST vociferous part of the endless debate about sex education ignores one of the main points. What use is there in long argument about the exact ages at which girls and boys should get the information? Whatever we might prefer as an ideal, the practical fact is that most of them *will* begin to receive the first smatterings no later than the time at which they go outside the house alone.

The sole question that parents have the power to decide is, "Shall the instruction be accurate, reasonably complete, and wholesome; or shall it be misleading, excitingly incomplete, and probably unwholesome?"

I make the foregoing statements in the hope of pushing straight to the crux of our problem, and with sympathy for the mothers and fathers who are reluctant to follow a bold course. Those who are timid are mistaken only in their belief that danger can be escaped if they remain silent about puzzles that are sure to come to practically every normally intelligent, healthy, and observant child. They are not mistaken in feeling that real dangers are involved.

When all is said, the impressions the more reticent mothers and fathers give to their children are no more false than the ones created in some self-consciously blasé homes where the amount of open talk about sex in the presence of children reaches ridiculous proportions. Lop-

sided emphasis upon the sheerly physical may leave girls and boys with the notion that sex is almost the only driving interest in life, but still that it is incapable of being elevated much above the level of a transiently exciting mechanical game.

Undistorted truth is approached only when children learn the completely rounded story. It should cover the entire range from the unabashed physical to the highest romantic and esthetic values. Shamefaced evasion in regard to the physical may do a child great harm later. On the other side of the question, he is certain to be cheated in later life if he is not provided with an appreciation of the possibilities of enduring romance.

No one can divorce physical sex completely from mental considerations—such as some conceptions of morality, duty, beauty, and some desire for dependability in companionship and affection. One of the chief reasons for the ultimate frustration that almost invariably results from casual sex conduct seems to me to be that it lacks the overtones for which human beings yearn.

All that follows is based upon those convictions, reached through professional study of actual experiences of men and women and the outcome for them of their trials and errors.

The suggestions I am making are aimed frankly at training girls and boys for marriage; marriage that is a healthy combination of the unapologetically high-minded and romantic and the unapologetically physical. Such marriage provides the happiest possible sex adjustment in any situation our children would call civilized. I would shape all training to the ideal that faithfulness to its vows is essential for its fullest success.

Next to the inexcusable error of telling children absolutely nothing, the worst plan that can be followed is the one most frequently used; that is, to wait until they approach adolescence and then tell them everything at once.

At puberty, interest turns strongly toward sex, although a child may comprehend only dimly the various ways in which the inner stirrings are manifesting themselves. Sudden concentration of this interest by the familiar "serious talks" will add to its strength.

The best that can be accomplished by this method is a clarification of information and misinformation the child probably has had long before the parent decided the day had come when the truth could be told. The greatest hazard in long-delayed discussions, in which previously barred facts come in a rush and all pent-up questions are invited, is that they may overwhelm a child.

I am not referring entirely to the fact that this stirring of an already smouldering fire will increase the temptation of certain girls and boys to try physical experiments. They can be overwhelmed in subtle, emotional ways that do not show obviously in open conduct; for example, by being plunged into a preoccupation with crude sex rumination, or into the opposite, unwholesome revulsion against normal, physical realities.

No matter with what detachment the talk is delivered to boys and girls in whom strong impulses have definitely begun to awaken, it will be impossible to prevent them from reacting personally and emotionally.

The best way to work toward an accurate picture of any subject that involves personal applications, in which passions are latent, and around which prejudices swirl is to sketch the picture as impersonally, as dispassionately,

and with as great freedom from prejudice as possible. For that reason, I would begin to give children accurately proportioned sex information before they can see anything powerfully and immediately personal in it; before vague impulses can remotely approach passion; at a time when their unsullied minds are freest from prejudices of any sort.

In other words, I would begin to give children healthy, dependable information just as soon as they can talk. That is before unwisely vulgar or unwisely puritanical whispers have started them by so much as one step toward preconceptions that are detrimental.

At this early period they should be presented every bit of truth that they can understand; and also a great deal that they can grasp only as words at first. Depersonalized phrases about sex should come to them as unexcitedly and cleanly as the partly understood and partly incomprehensible phrases they hear applied to all the other honest facts of life that they slowly are learning.

The knowledge should be absorbed through open, casual comments, a little at a time. It should be acquired so quietly, as well as so early, that children will feel later that they always have been aware of it, as they seem to themselves always to have been aware of the stars.

I am sure many mothers and fathers will be sincerely afraid this plan will stimulate curiosity prematurely and excessively. To them I can give my word that I never have known a case in which the effect was not exactly the reverse.

The frank, natural approach, held to sensible proportion, promotes decent thinking, morality, and happiness. The mystery and hush that surround sex topics for young

children in most homes, combined with the conflicting information, misinformation, and ribaldry of careless comments heard outside the home, are the things that implant immoderate curiosity in a young child.

The most harmless interest in any conceivable subject would be exaggerated if it brought forth baffling evasions; disapproval on this side, laughter and suggestive jokes on that, and never any authoritative explanation.

Suppose a boy were to ask, quite simply, "How do birds fly?" and that his mother for some incomprehensible reason, instead of being her usual serene and helpful self, was a little flustered and avoided a direct answer. Suppose he sensed also that all the grown persons present exchanged meaning glances, looked amused, or seemed self-conscious.

Suppose he then asked a friendly big boy of the neighborhood, and that the big boy called to another big boy, "Here's a hot one, Charlie! The kid wants to know how birds fly." At that the other big boy might laugh and say, "Why not get Jennie Yarrington to show you? I see you walking home from kindergarten with her." Then both big boys would laugh.

Although troubled by the laughter, suppose he did ask Jennie. And she might say she didn't know, but that her brother, who knew lots of things because he was three years older, said he thought it had something to do with their father and mother—he was trying to find out exactly what.

Would the boy, whose inquiry had been as blameless as asking the time of day, be less or more interested by now? He assuredly would begin to feel that what had

seemed innocent enough to him, was far from innocent; but would he be less or more eager to press his investigation because of that?

The "big boy," "big girl," and "little playmate" road is the one by which most sex information comes to children. It is supplemented, of course, by the accumulation of scraps from various other sources, including remarks overheard on the street and elsewhere, the observation of animals, allusions in books and movies; often from blatant sketches and four-letter words scrawled on public walls.

To make our comparison of the boy's desire to know how birds fly carry its full significance, we would have to suppose further that the curiosity he was trying to settle was not merely one that *might* arise. We would have to say it was one that was *sure* to arise in one form or another, and one that would become more personal and more intense as years passed. We would have to add, finally, that instead of being invariably harmless in its consequences, it could become the basis of damaging emotional bents in later life and of behavior almost certain to cause unhappiness.

"The child couldn't possibly understand anyway," is one of the principle justifications that the silent parents embrace with all sincerity. Are the excuses with which they honestly convince themselves the real reasons for their evasion? I think not. I believe the real reasons are: their own embarrassment about physical facts; the fear that they will excite their children unduly; or, sometimes, a concern about what the neighbors and their friends will think of such plain talk to a little boy or girl.

Is it imaginable that a mother or father would hesitate

to say, even to a baby, "Look! That is a railroad train. The engine pulls it by electricity." Is it possible that a parent would be able to persuade himself that he should seal his lips because, "It will be years before the child has any occasion for train trips; and besides, how could he grasp this great mystery of electricity?"

The wisdom of downright honesty—as I have observed its workings in many instances—is typified in the contrast between the result of a deception and the result of complete information upon a little girl. On her third birthday anniversary she was bright enough to connect ideas and ask where she came from three years before. Her mother was doubtful as to how much should be told a child that young, and was in a hurry. So she took refuge in the decrepit fabrication:

"Oh, the doctor brought you."

"Doctor Blank?" the girl demanded with delight, naming a doctor of whom she was very fond.

"No," the mother parried; "it was another doctor whom you don't know."

"Will I ever see him?"

"Yes, maybe, some day. Mother has to go now."

"Where did he get me?" pleaded the girl, running beside her mother, who was welcoming the relief of rushing away for an appointment.

The next day the girl's six-year-old sister told the mother that the younger girl had questioned her so persistently after the mother left that she had told her all she knew. This was that they began to live in their mother's body, starting from a seed from their father's body, and had come out when they were babies—on their "birth" days.

The mother, to whom the pother of the day before now

looked rather silly, went to her three-year-old daughter and said in a friendly, matter-of-fact way:

"Now you know where you came from, don't you."

"Sister said from you," answered the girl.

"That's right," said the mother. "Don't you remember more than that?"

It was apparent that the girl tried to recall all the sister had told her, but could not. "I don't know any more," she said finally in the regretful, but unembarrassed, tone she would have used to admit she had forgotten how much two times two was. Development from a seed, a process almost altogether beyond her ken as yet, cannot stir as much enthusiasm as a fable that involves a glamorously unidentified doctor who may be as charming as Dr. Blank, a keenly definite association in her life.

A father tells me he took his sons, one two and three-fourths and one eight years old, to the cattle barn on a farm. The boys were fascinated by the long row of cows with their heads in stanchions; especially so because the older boy, playing railroad engineer with his brother, had once caught his head in the rungs of a chair that served as an engine cab. The father pointed out one cow in a box stall, and remarked:

"She is kept in there because she is going to have a calf. It is inside her now, and will come out when it is strong enough. See how big she is?"

The boys showed mild interest, but soon returned to the row of milk cows. A day or two later, the father entered their playroom and found that they had put the heads of several stuffed animal toys through the rungs of a chair, to play at milking.

"You remember the cows," the father said to the two

and three-fourths-year-old son, "where was the calf?"

"Where *was* the calf?" the youngster appealed to his brother: "I didn't see him."

"Oh, you know," the older boy said with some patronage; "the calf was inside that big cow."

The only discernible feeling of the older boy was his sense of superiority because he remembered, and his little brother had forgotten. He did not display the least shyness about the calf, nor the slightest hint of hidden sex curiosity.

A Dallas, Texas, father and mother confess to their friends what happened when they steeled themselves to take their seven-year-old son for a long walk and tell him everything. He heard them through attentively, then lapsed into silence. The parents had read of sex repression, and they urgently pressed him to ask them about anything that bothered him.

"There's only one thing," he murmured unhappily.

"Ask it," pleaded his parents.

"Then why," the lad burst out, "do I have to wear this old brown sweater?"

LET'S ENCOURAGE HEALTHY DECENCY

THERE IS nothing exciting, dirty, sly, nor embarrassing about a sex truth to a child who is not sex conscious. It is like any other truth to him, until he hears the whispers and senses the strange mixture of shame, intense interest, and flashes of leering amusement with which various older persons regard it.

The arousal of marked concern over sex realities in a child is as near to impossible as the arousal of concern over any other realities until the child is *ready* to understand them, until they fit into some previous experience or information of his own. When that point is reached, normally aggressive children will hunt additional information.

Children who begin to hear the truth in infancy when part of it is beyond their understanding and cannot impress them, will retain some clean-minded impressions as a groundwork. The unassimilated part can do no harm. If casual, accurate comments are continued, gradually taking on meaning, the children will have the weight of parental authority waiting to offset vulgar, inaccurate statements that will seep to them.

For the sake of possible doubters, I probably should explain that my insistence that ideas *will* seep from irresponsible sources is no unsupported assumption on my part. The fact is accepted without question by all authorities who have made studies of children's sex learning.

To parents who believe they can protect boys and girls from all this, I concede that I, too, have encountered instances like the ones they usually cite—the occasional adults who assert they remained in complete innocence until they were well into their teens. Aside from the possibility that these adults have forgotten how soon they really learned, and aside from the undesirability of such prolonged ignorance, we are forced to conclude that they did not play with average playmates. They must also have been exceptionally unobservant of pets and other animals, and exceptionally unimaginative about marriages and the unexplained arrival of babies.

Careful surveys show that the average child is informed or misinformed when his parents still think of him as only a few years out of infancy. A case in point is supplied by the six-year-old girl who was ready with an intelligent answer on her sister's third birthday when the sister began to wonder about births. Some months previously the older girl had happened to hear the expression, "before you were born," and had asked her mother what it meant. The mother told her, despite some misgiving because she thought the child was too young to know.

"Is that what it means," the girl exclaimed. "I know about that. Fred [a nine-year-old playmate] told me. He said it hurt your mother awfully and made her terribly sick."

The mother replied that the pain had been overshadowed almost immediately afterward by the pleasure she had from her baby daughter.

"And the mother isn't truly 'sick,' dear," she wisely added. "It's healthy and natural for babies to be born

that way. You mustn't think of it as a form of 'sickness.'"

The playmate's story did not do any real damage, particularly since the mother learned of it and hastened to proportion the details. That was all there was left for her to do. She had missed her earlier opportunity to make her daughter's *first* impression truer than a nine-year-old boy could make it.

The boy's clumsy talk, of course, had contained at least one element of psychologic danger. A horror of childbirth (strangely dreaded most in environments where medical advances have made it safest), and a fear of being physically torn in sex relations persist emotionally in some women after their conscious reasoning has evaluated the actual dangers. These persistent, partly uncontrollable dreads are recognized factors in some serious marital maladjustments and in emotional stresses of some women who remain unmarried.

Part of the explanation for their existence is that they are implanted in childhood by morbid, terrifying talk; or, more rarely, by frightening childhood sex experiences.

Parents should set it down as a first principle to emphasize, especially to young daughters, the wholesome healthiness of all normal aspects of marriage. They should strictly suppress all sickly misinformation, and should proportion the joys of marriage companionship and motherhood as outweighing the pain, both of childbirth and of the first physical sex relations.

I speak out plainly on the last topic, because I believe some parents are influenced more than they realize by a feeling that it is a little safer to allow their young daughters to associate the idea of suffering with the idea of the loss

of virginity. The amount of moral safety added by this notion is doubtful at best, while the harm it can do is evident.

Terror of passing pain obviously is not strong enough to stop any of the girls whose training in other ways—in some cases perhaps combined with an unusual constitutional sex drive—leads them into early, illicit relationships. But a study of the records of unhappy marriages shows that this deeply hidden fear *is* strong enough in certain women to help to launch them and their husbands into the beginnings of grave tension.

A much more potent moral safeguard than can be created by unnatural fear is provided for the girl and boy who cannot remember a time when their parents were not willing to talk to them openly and truthfully. If a day ever comes when such children are tempted to depart from the code their parents have laid down, they will be far more likely to go to their parents for counsel than they otherwise would be.

Better than that—their everyday confidences throughout the years will help their parents to gauge the trend of ideas that are emerging and to shape them by timely, scarcely noticeable, hints.

In marked contrast, the children whose instruction is left to chance, obtain the distinct impression that the haphazard information they pick up is forbidden and indecent. They intuitively keep quiet before their parents about this tabooed lore. Many rigid persons thus are lulled into the notion that their children have no inkling of sex, and no interest in it, during the years when the children are establishing their initial attitudes.

As to the error of such complacency and the evidence

that silence stimulates curiosity, Earle Goudey's experience as teacher of biology in the public schools of Bronxville, N. Y., is worth consideration.

Mr. Goudey states (in the May, 1936, issue of *Progressive Education*) that "out of 50 boys, the 5 most precocious in their information and experiences were among the 40 whose parents said they knew nothing about sex." He adds that the one whose parents reacted most emphatically in their insistence that he was completely innocent, was a sex problem in the neighborhood.

Most mothers and fathers find that it takes a conscious effort to overcome their own embarrassment and apprehension and push themselves into the first attempt to speak candidly, without wincing, hesitation, or tenseness, in tones that suggest no excited overemphasis. Once the outspoken, sincere approach is achieved, the rest is comparatively easy.

The general principle of talking *exactly* as about any other truths of life is a guide to which all problems can be referred as they arise. I believe it is more useful than the formulation of set speeches and answers, although they may help.

This rule means that sex will *not* be talked about so often that its importance is exaggerated (we would not harangue a child about railroad trains every day). On the other hand, if he seemed to talk constantly of railroad trains for a few days after we first called his attention to one, we would not get excited. We would know the interest soon would get back into proportion.

As a corollary to the proposition of perfectly natural conversations with children about sex, everything that is said will be absolutely specific—as forthright as our state-

ments about the weather. Determine firmly upon this course and any question a child asks can be answered promptly, as all questions should be, without the strain that comes from half-truths and falsehoods.

The ideal is that every question will be answered before the child thinks of it. A question shows that some unsatisfied curiosity already exists; that the child may have acquired some bias of which parents would not approve.

The solid foundation should be the companionship and affection relations of marriage; and the dignity of love, begetting, birth, and manly and womanly maturity. There is authentic poetry in all these things for persons of perception, free from prudery; and the poetry is a realistic part of successful marriages.

Properly trained children will learn to be in sympathy with Thoreau's words, "I lose my respect for the man who can make the mysteries of sex the subject of a coarse jest, yet, when you speak earnestly and seriously on the subject is silent."

Still, the instruction should never be so poetic that it becomes vague. Here, I believe, some conscientious advisors of children err, through overeagerness to call attention to the lasting romance that is so frequently belittled by the vulgar and cynical. Probably, too, for the more sensitive, it is because they themselves cannot quite overcome their deeply ingrained feeling that the physical story is unpoetic, if not downright sordid and ugly.

The trees and the flowers and the birds and the bees have their legitimate place; but the child should not be loaded down with extravagant images that may confuse him. He will not be helped much by misty visions of marriage beds surrounded by ambitious bees and chirrup-

ing birds who have swallowed cherry seeds that will grow into trees for nests for the lovely eggs from which their darling little babies will peck their way. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is pretty enough.

Parents should tell their girls and boys exactly what happens in a marriage bed—being careful always to give enduring love the prominence it truly takes with men and women who attain the happiest lives. Children should be told exactly how the seed from the father is implanted in the mother; exactly how pregnancy can result; exactly how and where the baby develops, and exactly how it is born.

Those advisors who are half-informed about some of the details—as a surprising number of grown men and women are—should fortify themselves from a good source book before they attempt to instruct three-year-old children.

Scientific terms for all parts of the body and their functions should be used. These terms are unsmirched with connotations either of vulgarity or prudery. At the same time, children should be taught the probable colloquial words of playground and street. They should be equipped to see in an instant that gossips tell them awkwardly only what their parents already have told them well.

There is no reason why a great deal should not be done through biology and animal example. This is not enough, however, unless it is translated into human applications. The human story is the one that concerns human beings most deeply.

I am certain, for example, that a girl will obtain a more serviceable idea of menstruation through placid, explicit comments from her mother than she could get from any

biology course. Is it too much to hope that mothers will not refer to the period as "the sick time" and that none will suggest to adolescent daughters that they keep note of when they are going to "be sick" so that they can avoid plans for healthy and normal activities on those days?

If a girl has been aware of the truth for years before its personal application, she will adjust herself better emotionally when she reaches the age of first menstruation. She is doubly taxed if the knowledge arrives with, or only shortly in advance, of what may be a disturbing event.

For the sake of peace with other mothers and fathers, it is a good idea for parents who meet their sex-educational responsibilities to instruct their children not to talk about what they are told.

It should be made clear that this is not because there is anything disgraceful in the simple truth. It is only that certain parents have different beliefs about when a child should know, and that it is unkind and rude to say things that will offend them unnecessarily. In the final analysis, our own children's best interests are our own affair and our own duty. Let us not be paralyzed by the possible opinions of neighbors and friends, after we have made all sympathetic attempts to spare them avoidable distress.

The healthy companionship that is a basis for happy relations between women and men should be established by arranging for boys and girls to play together from infancy onward. This will give children the habit of looking upon one another first of all as interesting associates—good at building with blocks, good at jumping rope, fast runners, ready with laughter on merry occasions. It is a much more healthy habit than that of youngsters to whom the opposite sex is always a little awesome and remote.

The dawn of sharp sex-consciousness will find good comrades moored to memories of camaraderie—the long run values that blossom in the warmth of other urges in well-rounded men and women, and wither under the emotional conflicts of those whose training has been poorly proportioned.

The cultivation of easy friendliness upon the carefree interests that girls and boys share, should not try to hide the fact that there are differences. On the contrary, the inescapable differences should be called clearly to children's attention. Photographs of paintings and statues, or visits to art museums, provide one entirely impersonal opportunity to say: "This is a man," "This is a woman," "This is a little girl," "This is a boy."

The announcements should be as casual as, "This is a painting of a knight in armor," and if the representations are seen as early as they should be, the child will be more excited by the knight.

An unselfconscious start is fostered also by having brothers and sisters undress and bathe together from babyhood. They should be permitted also to see their fathers and mothers undress—in the normal routine of the household—with no suggestion of coyness. This normal routine rules out, of course, self-conscious "undressing parties" and all hints of pre-arranged display that can throw sex-interest out of proportion.

When the situations present themselves as a matter of course, a young child will accept them as a matter of course. It will seem to a small girl to be only a natural sequence—which it really is—that her mother's breasts are developed while hers are not, since her mother is larger in every way.

Of the wholesomeness of this beginning I am absolutely sure. As children grow, a question will intrude itself upon which I frankly can state no flat rule. The dependable evidence seems to me insufficient to justify anyone in an unqualified conclusion on either side. The question is, "At what age should children be stopped from seeing their parents nude, and from undressing together, whether of the same or opposite sexes?"

Clearly recognizable sex stirrings develop slowly in certain children. With others the first rudimentary awakening can be noticed very early, even before the age of five years. We have no scientific proof of the final results to be expected when an already sex-conscious child is given a chance for unhampered observation. We cannot be certain that such observation will not overstimulate a strongly sex-conscious child or that attention may not become too much centered on a sister, brother, parent, or anyone else who is in unrestrained contact with the child.

Since there is an unsolved question here, the safest plan seems to me to be to keep an unobtrusive but reasonably close watch on each child separately while encouraging unabashed bathing and undressing before others. Upon the first *unmistakable* evidence of marked and sustained interest—definitely prolonged staring, obviously intentional touching, or any other sign—I should arrange to have all bathing and undressing done privately. After that I believe the possible dangers of free mingling outweigh the unquestionable good it does through its discouragement of a sneaking attitude toward sex.

The change should be initiated quietly, without producing the child's curiosity by calling special attention to it. The grown persons in charge simply should establish a

schedule by which the overinterested boy or girl undresses and bathes alone, and stop undressing themselves before the child whose interest in their bodies continues to be excessive.

I know of no field in which the specific needs of individuals should be taken into account more fully than in sex education. Although the same general principles hold for all, details must be worked out to fit each child. The boy or girl who is overbold should be redirected by a calm home routine that will make for more modesty. The one who is sensitive, overbashful, suspiciously "disgusted" about sex, should be retrained through a slightly increased emphasis by parents on a candid attitude, an emphasis applied so gradually that it will not cause a reaction.

So it should be with other inclinations, pressing always toward the promotion of a completely aware, clean-minded, wholesomely self-controlled adult.

GIRLISH BOYS AND BOYISH GIRLS

FEW, IF any, human beings or other animals have the emotional makeup of either the male or female completely and exclusively. We see some feminine characteristics in nearly all men. Some qualities that could be classified as masculine are evident in nearly all women.

A thin scattering of such minor inclinations does not endanger any man or woman whose strongly predominant bent is definitely in line with bodily structure. The inclinations become a threat only in the degree to which they encroach upon the strength of characteristics nature intended to be dominant.

It is clear, nevertheless, that women and men do not have to reach the point at which they are 50 per cent masculine and 50 per cent feminine in their impulses to be thrown into emotional conflict about sex and the many concerns of everyday life that are more or less directly colored by sex attitudes. Any really marked digression from the normal and the personally and socially acceptable can cause inner tension.

The strain can affect persons who are themselves unaware of the presence of the forbidden pull in them. This must be included among the many possible reasons why certain men find it so hard to be what the old expression describes as "a man among men." They are not homosexual in the popular meaning of the term, as it applies to

actual sex conduct; yet they are too dilute in their masculinity to be confident of themselves, or to inspire the confidence of others in their forcefulness.

I am so eager to avoid any exaggeration of the problems of sex and its ramifications that I have hesitated before even hinting at the possibility of a harmful homosexual tinge that cannot be readily recognized. I cannot persuade myself that the possibility can safely be ignored. If those of us who know the facts and can mention them without too much prejudice or an effort at sensational writing neglect to advise the moderate precaution that is necessary in child training, to whom shall parents turn?

This topic is likely to be cloudy for mothers and fathers. They are accustomed to think of homosexuality only when it becomes obvious, in deliberately practiced sexual inversion, or in mannerisms made unpleasantly familiar by stage impersonations of "fairies." The retraining of such advanced cases into more normal emotional attitudes and conduct is a task for the psychiatrist, and is difficult.

The way mothers and fathers can protect and strengthen their children is through a realization that a tendency toward too much femininity in their boys or too much masculinity in their girls will lessen the chances for happy adjustment to some extent, even if it is not followed to the ultimate extremes.

The question whether the original inclinations toward departures from the normal are due to glandular or other physical causes need not bother parents greatly. That is a problem for scientists; and they have not reached a final, unchallengeable answer. In any case, the time to correct deviations by painstaking training is in childhood. We know that careless training of children who may or

may not have a constitutional predisposition toward homosexuality can encourage the manifestations.

The effect is cumulative. Each advance into behavior that makes a child eccentric and unpopular with playmates increases a little the inclination to find satisfaction in being different; decreases somewhat the chance for satisfaction in normal companionships and conduct.

One of the histories in my files shows that a boy who was sent to me for retraining at twelve years attracted his mother's admiring notice at eighteen months when he stroked with apparent delight a pink satin dress she wore. This mother was the only daughter in her family. She felt that her four brothers had dominated her, and she had vowed that when she had children they would be free to follow their own interests.

An unprejudiced observer might have wondered whether the rapid later growth of the baby's sensitiveness to pretty things was not a result of his mother's pleasure whenever he happened to hit upon behavior that reflected *her* special interests. To the mother, however, it seemed to come from a spontaneous inner urge of the child. Determined that he should realize his true self, she continued to reveal her satisfaction every time he showed the tendency.

When the boy was about three years old, the mother remembers, a close friend of the family, an Army Major, saw him weave a garland of flowers for his hair. The Major grumbled his distaste for such doings by a boy—trust an Army man on this point.

Her son's garland-weaving was warmly defended by the mother. I believe she would have been right if this had been only an exceptional occupation among many nor-

mally boyish ones. Several times I have had occasion to reassure anxious parents about similar incidents. One aggressively masculine father actually trembled as he told me that his sturdy four-year-old son had tied a big blue bow on the post of his little bed. Why shouldn't the boy like a silk bow—provided his main trend was clearly manly?

The reverse was true of the mother's boy of whom I am writing. He was allowed to get practically *all* his pleasures from girlish activities. I do not mean that his mother wanted him to be girlish. Only in very rare instances (like the one described in an earlier chapter) do families seem intentionally set upon making a son girlish or a daughter boyish. In this as in other behavior, they simply overlook the unfortunate offshoots of some desirable quality they hope to instill. They are so overjoyed at a boy's healthy aggressiveness, for example, that they close their eyes when aggression leaps restraint and becomes cruelty to weaker playmates.

So this mother blinked the danger signals of her boy's special trouble. She accepted effeminacy as a necessary part of the love of beauty that she admired. At seven or eight the son announced that he preferred smocks to ordinary boy's clothes. He was permitted to wear them. This alone would have been enough to mark him at any school or on any playground. He played less and less with other boys. With every passing year his weakness in games and his growing effeminacy made the boys more reluctant to include him. At last he gave up all attempts.

When he began to approach adolescence his girlishness became so evident that even a doting mother could no longer fail to be alarmed. The bitterest irony of all, the

genuinely artistic mother told me, was that she suddenly realized at this time that his taste was not good. It revealed only a liking for fancy things, rather than truly beautiful ones.

As part of his retraining, we sent him to a military school. I would not have advised the move in his particular case if this had not been an unusual school with a headmaster who showed keen understanding of the problem. In the first place, it was a junior school, limited to boys below the age of acute sex consciousness. Hazing, which would have been extremely harmful to the oversensitive boy, was not permitted. All students were required to play games regularly, but intense rivalry and the development of athletic heroes was discouraged.

The opening incidents in the boy's new life are suggestive of our general plan to enforce more manly appearance, interests, and behavior; a plan that was maintained for years whenever the slightest effeminate inclination appeared.

I had postponed for a few days the prescription that the boy's shoulder-long hair be cut. I believed it could be accomplished with less tension as one incident of compliance with the school's custom. The headmaster mildly suggested a haircut on the first day, and the boy returned from the barbershop with little less than a girlish bob. "Now let's get a regular haircut!" the headmaster said kindly. Somewhat reluctantly, the boy went back and had his hair cut like a boy's.

At first he fluttered like a frightened bird in games, but soon was developing confidence and ability and becoming interested. Slowly in the beginning, and then more rap-

idly, he made friends among his classmates. When he later put off his uniform he chose regular boy's clothes.

He is being graduated from an Eastern college this year; a popular, well adjusted, normally manly youth. If he had been allowed to continue in the course he was following at twelve, open homosexuality in adulthood would have been practically forced upon him by his looks, his dress, and his manner.

The problem of effeminate inclinations in boys and masculine inclinations in girls often is entangled with parental and family ties. For instance, a father whose affection life has been divided distressingly by an excessive attachment to his father brings his son to me for advice. This boy at nineteen, is excessively devoted to the father, and already is deeply troubled by a reaction against sexuality. (Part of his father's conflict comes from an ideal of marriage without "sexuality"—his term.) The boy is emotionally upset also over the choice of a career, and has his father's habit of swinging between depression and overenthusiasm.

A devotion that threatens adequate masculinity is the last thing the father would have encouraged, especially after his own experience. His ideals of conduct for his son have been rigid, and they have been followed. The attachment was fostered unwittingly. The father, greatly in need of affection and understanding because of his own troubled life, failed to notice that his son's dependence upon him did not have a wholesome balance of other interests and affections.

Here again, as in the prevention of jealousy, I advise parents to apply ordinary intelligence, without prolonged

worry over their own interpretations of technically worded psychologic concepts of "attachments." If a mother is alert and critical, she can tell when a daughter concentrates an undue amount of affection and dependence upon her, a sister, or a girl playmate. The wide-awake father can make a similar decision in regard to his son. The great need is for more alertness and more sane evaluation of the effect of training.

I do not remotely suggest that every activity of children should be looked upon askance. Our consciousness of possible danger here should be no greater than our consciousness of the possible danger of rickets. A mother can give a few precautionary spoonfuls of cod-liver oil without living in constant dread of deformities.

A piquant amount of tomboyishness in a girl surely is not undesirable. Only if it develops too rapidly, should deliberate training in womanly activities be set against it. The girl who obviously is becoming too boyish should not be permitted to dress boyishly; nor to play as an equal in boy's games; nor to box or wrestle with boys to show her strength and courage. She should be dissuaded from a noticeably protective or possessive attitude toward other girls, and from doing anything that will cause her to get satisfaction from masculine, rather than feminine, traits.

The little boy who seems unusually interested in dolls and ribbons should not be allowed to be exclusively interested in them. He should be coached into real skill and enthusiasm in boys' games, and in the use of hammers, nails, and saws. No matter how long it takes, the coaching should be kept up until he has an efficiency in manly activities that will give him pleasure and insure that he will continue to take part in them willingly.

If a child's gait, gesture, or voice becomes suggestive of the opposite sex, the parents should go to work on it at once—just as they would on any postural defect.

Under no circumstances should a boy who is too girlish or a girl who is too boyish be given the impression that the family regards him as a "hopeless sissy" or her as a "hopeless tomboy." Such insinuations may persuade a child that there really is an unchangeable difference; widen the estrangement from the usual energy outlets; finally create pride in acting differently.

Before a boy or girl beyond the age of adolescence is sent to a one-sex school, parents should be absolutely sure that the child is tending toward a normal sex pattern. With those who clearly are developing normally there is no need for concern.

Where there is any doubt, I would not take a chance on the "crushes" that often are fostered when adolescent and postadolescent girls are in close contact with girls exclusively and when boys of that age are intimately associated only with boys. Not that the harm done by intense school and college "crushes" is irrevocable, even when they result in the overt practice of homosexuality. Still they are too dangerous to risk for a boy or girl of whom we are uncertain.

Sympathetic understanding, pressure against undesirable behavior, and positive encouragements for desirable behavior, including quiet praise for accomplishments along the desired lines, should be the invariable rule. The plan would provide the world with more manly men and more well-adjusted women.

ESCAPADES OF THE YEARS OF INNOCENCE

A NATIONALLY KNOWN child specialist spoke to me last night of a talk he had with a justifiably anxious mother. Her young daughter had been one of his patients for years and the mother turned to him with a problem encountered in various forms by a great number of parents.

Her daughter just had confided that a playmate—a sweet, well-mannered girl of ten, who was the daughter's closest friend—climbed frequently to a tree house built by neighborhood boys of approximately their age. There she undressed, and welcomed the boys' familiarities. The little girl and two of the boys had whispered the exciting secret enticingly to their chum.

"It is unbelievable that this could happen in a neighborhood like ours!" the troubled mother exclaimed.

The physician reminded her sympathetically of his long practice among children, largely of excellent families and advantages. In those years, he said, he had learned of similar happenings so frequently that he could only conclude they were more prevalent than he, as a father, liked to believe.

"I suppose I overstate my own childhood purity when I call this 'unbelievable,'" the mother remarked after pondering the doctor's words. "As a matter of fact, I know

of several times when my playmates went practically as far. I refused to take an active part, but I did look on, and I helped to hide the escapades from our parents."

I agreed with the physician that his friend's reluctance to face and admit the extent to which sex play exists among growing girls and boys was more or less typical. The disclosures of my own patients confirm the belief generally held by investigators in this field that practically all children are involved at some time in displays of intense interest and that many take part in advanced sex play.

The play need not go to the extreme of attempts at complete intimacy to be plainly recognizable for what it is. More frequently it is the unbuttoning of each other's clothes or inquisitive fondling between the same or opposite sexes. Less direct signs of unmistakable interest may include spying.

It is not accurate to suppose that boys always are the aggressors. The advances often come from girls. To choose an unmelodramatic example: In a school of which I am an advisor, the teachers now are quietly defeating the eagerness of a preadolescent girl to wrestle with a bored boy of the same age. He protests that she does not wrestle right, but only pulls him down and holds him.

An acquaintance, now in stolid middle age, tells me of this incident. A neighbor girl of about sixteen, "lovely in her 1898 dress," he says, "and always primly distant before that evening," strolled over to his crowd of younger boys and girls when he was a tallish twelve. She proposed a post-office game, popular in that era. She called him into the shadowy "office" behind a flowering trellis, and smothered him in immodest kisses that left him so breathlessly stirred that he "was never a child again." "Don't tell," she

whispered, and ran back to the porch where her sedate and strict father and mother were sitting.

Specific examples in addition to the three I have mentioned briefly would help to call the attention of parents to possibilities of disturbing incidents in home and neighborhood situations that seem perfectly protected. But a longer list might lead some to overestimate the possibilities of serious mishaps. Probably the best way to obtain an undistorted estimate of the true situation is to turn now from individual cases to inquiries that cover large groups.

In responsible statistical surveys of women and men of good standing in their communities, an average of around one out of every five admits advanced experiences with other children before the age of fourteen. These experiences range from intimate exploratory fondling to more direct activities. Questions as to the milder manifestations of unmistakable sex interest in childhood would be expected to bring forth a much larger number of revelations.

This is a situation to which parents cannot afford to shut their eyes; yet, it warrants neither the shudders with which the most apprehensive adults react to it; nor the flavor of glee with which those who seem to advocate a misty new freedom parade bits of the evidence.

The latter argument hardly need be labored. It is unlikely that any mothers and fathers—no matter how liberal—really will be indifferent when their own children are in question. Need we fear that the mother and father of the little girl who regularly visited the boys' tree house will be nonchalant? They would be foolish if they were—and so would the parents of the boys, whose physical inclinations are being centered and intensified prematurely.

The greatest danger lies in the opposite direction. The reason I state the probable proportion of children touched by sheer sex escapades is that parents who discover a child of theirs is implicated usually are shocked into a horror that may be detrimental to the child.

The girl and the boys of the tree house most assuredly are not incurably harmed, nor irretrievably bad. They might be permanently injured, however, if someone convinced them that they were. Indiscreet children can be made reckless or burdened with a feeling of gnawing guilt that they will carry into later life if they are censured unforgivingly for some passing childhood fault. Parents are most likely to be unwisely severe with a little girl, because they themselves are swayed by ideals of the double standard.

The average mother will be aided in such a trial if she reminds herself that young children's morality is not highly developed. They are relatively shameless—in the worst sense of the word as well as the best. The worried parent should remember also that a certain amount of sex interest is a healthy part of normal emotional development.

This does not imply that sex play should be approved, as the radical popular theorists seem to be hinting. In my opinion, all reasonable precautions should be taken to guard against its development. When we say "reasonable" precautions, we exclude a continual, nagging watch, and interminable suspicion. A child will sense lack of trust and be handicapped by it.

Unfettered companionship between boys and girls is too valuable in any case to sacrifice to the mere possibility of misadventures. Nevertheless a parent is not justified in being entirely incurious if children spend hours together

in unexplained activities. And a child discovered in sex adventures too direct to be ignored should understand beyond question that this conduct must stop.

I would use punishment without any fear that great damage can be done to the personality by a reasonable repression of admittedly natural curiosity and impulses. A much greater danger than can come from moderate repression is invited when physical interest and license are allowed to progress too far.

Even those who leave moral and religious codes out of the question should be able to see that the chances for continued happy adjustments in any society are slender for girls and boys who are not trained to fit themselves passably into the rules of that society. There are *personal* penalties, too, over and above the social penalties imposed by a monogamous civilization for violation of its rules. It is as defeating, personally, for a man or a woman to be dominated by physical sex, shorn of nearly all idealism, as it is to be dominated by an imitation of idealism that vainly tries to deny normal physical impulses.

Our responsibility is not only to remove the artificial stimulation to curiosity created by the mystery with which sex is surrounded in advanced civilizations. We must also direct the normal growth of normal physical interest until the child's own judgment takes control. The balance is exacting.

In no other sphere do emotions and habit training have greater power than they have in sex. An outline of one man's bewilderment will show how complicated the interrelation of influences can be, and indicate some of the possible results of unwise training.

At the age of thirty-six this man consults me because his insecurity about his ability to sustain a healthy marriage association makes him afraid to marry. Several years before this he was much in love. He tells me that he would have married happily then if he could have conquered the doubt of himself. His decision that he had to break his engagement to the girl made him acutely conscious of the shadow that long had lurked, unacknowledged, in the background of his awareness.

He is a cultured gentleman, prominent in his profession, good looking, and has charm. Women find him exceptionally attractive; and a little baffling. He responds with the eagerness of the lonely to their friendliness, but his fear chills him as soon as he believes their interest approaches closer than distant admiration. He is eager to marry, yet says he cannot unless he gains more confidence.

His mother is a woman of ideals that are fine, when followed in moderation. She fostered strongly in her children her own literary and artistic enthusiasms. High minded about sex herself—to the point of Puritanism, unfortunately—she drummed into this son the sacredness of womanhood and the baseness of vulgarly physical relations.

When financial reversals compelled a reduction in social expenses, her ambition to give her children all the advantages she could provide, induced her to take them to Europe to live. To save the expense of social contacts with her European neighbors and to be sure of her children's companions, she encouraged her boys and girls to play alone and to build their love for one another. She approved, practically demanded—all unwittingly—more

kissing and embracing between her and the children and between the children themselves than exists in normally affectionate families.

Sex play developed between the oldest boy and a younger sister. The mother had made the mistake of many others in assuming that brothers and sisters invariably are safe together. The truth is that the very closeness of their affection and associations can remove barriers. This boy was torn desperately between his ideals of womanhood and his weakness in suggesting to his sister the repetition of the secret familiarities he knew she would not repulse.

His disgust at this behavior, continued over many years, was deepened by his constantly increasing devotion to his mother and her ideals. Especially when she held him in her arms, he says, returning his kisses and murmured endearments, he was stricken by the thought of the anguish she would feel if she learned of his conduct with his sister. The circle of stimulated physical attachment to women, invariably darkened by shame, closed around him.

His training was made worse by his lack of outdoor play, his limited number of friends, and the overfastidiousness in dress which his mother inculcated. Even during the Lord Fauntleroy epidemic, his grooming attracted special gurgles of delight from matrons! He had been somewhat frail from infancy, a handicap increased by his energetic mother's insistence upon improvement of his mind to the neglect of his body. Not until he was in college in America did he recognize his onesidedness and painfully take up tennis, swimming, and horseback riding.

All stark advances between him and his sister stopped

in their teens. His mother never suspected them. His revulsion against his previous lack of control and his mystical adoration of womanhood now color his commendable feeling against illicit relations, but they do not stop there. They color also his reaction to the idea of really close associations with a wife whom he loves and respects. His reason tells him he should marry. His emotions pull him toward marriage—and repel him from it at the same time.

A man who was constitutionally more masculine and less sensitive might have overcome his early training without help. At thirty-six, this man will overcome it only through a struggle. The pity is that his mother did not start him right and help him sooner. The devoted mother still has no glimmer of what she did to him; like the thousands of other devoted parents who are doing analogous things today.

If his background had been uncomplicated by too much time alone and too little exercise, the result of his mother's teaching probably would have taken a more familiar turn. The average boy who is schooled to worship pure womanhood in a shrine with his own mother, learns in adolescence that all women are not as pure as he imagined. He usually is not sensitive enough to revolt against physical attraction, especially that of women who do not suggest his ideal. In fact, the strong lure of the type for him may impel a marriage that mystifies his friends—"nothing morally wrong with the girl; good enough family; but so stupid and common!"

If he marries a woman of his own cultural and intellectual level who does not succeed in changing him, she may feel—although she may be fond of him and admire him—that he is always a rather austere, strange man. He

may not realize it, but his emotional habits bar him from being completely at ease at all times with a woman whose refinement commands his enthusiastic esteem.

Thoughtful as we should be with boys, the proper balance between physical realities and idealism requires still greater thought with girls. For obviously sufficient reasons, daughters are guarded more closely than sons.

The most prevalent form of safeguard—even in this modern age when a voluble minority is acutely sex-conscious—still includes subtle warnings against the coarse instincts of males, linked with the prevalent frightening hints that loss of virginity is attended by great physical pain. The usual instruction includes also an ill-assorted mixture of glorification of the sanctity of marriage, which is altogether right, and insinuations that a real lady will not be much attracted to her physical “duties” in matrimony, which is a dangerous doctrine.

Between the strength of woman’s urges and man’s there may be natural, constitutional differences that are not apparent in the comparative force of rudimentary stirrings in young girls and boys and in the adults of other species. If so, we certainly should rule out every bit of training that tends to make these differences more marked, since they are blamed by wives and husbands as a source of unhappiness.

My own conviction is that a man and woman who are well adjusted to each other in other ways, generally manage to gain contentment despite this obstacle. But why do anything that may create unnecessary stumbling blocks for our daughters? Why be satisfied with anything less than a foundation for the most completely rounded life they can attain?

We cannot believe that all of them have the strongest possible foundation for satisfactory marriage now. Inquiries by serious students of the problem indicate that large numbers of married women do not experience a natural consummation and climax in the husband-wife relationship. Their replies to direct questionnaires reveal that many have not the remotest notion that such a tension-releasing climax is possible or desirable. The statements of the wives themselves often show that the fault is in their abnormal frigidity, rather than with the husband. In cases where the husband is responsible, the question remains as to how much of his fault is due to a training that promoted unnatural tenseness in him.

Among the wives who know nothing of consummation are some who can scarcely tolerate the physical side of their marriage. They approach it with a feeling of debasement. It must be admitted, nevertheless, that the happiness attained by others in the same group (to whom the physical seems "unimportant" or "mildly pleasant") refutes the arguments of amateur theorists who innocently chatter that a happy marriage is *entirely* a matter of sex technique.

The girl and boy who are equipped for the greatest attainable success in marriage will know that a large part of happiness rests on companionship, love, and faithfulness. They will appreciate the value of consideration for each other; the thousand and one little kindnesses and understandings that illuminate an association between human beings. They will find joy in their mutual intellectual interests and ideals; in the creation of a home; and in their children.

These things our fine old-fashioned mothers and fathers

taught well as a rule, both by precept and example. The emotional part of the story was slighted by them, as it is by most of us today.

Ideally trained children will absorb this emotional story, too, from the frank naturalness of their parents' comments—an unmelodramatic bit at a time. They will approach their married life after a psychologic preparation in which their mothers and fathers have done everything in their power to make their daughters freely feminine and their sons freely masculine, untrammelled by any unhealthy restraints that mar the naturalness of their marriage relationships.

This healthy balance between idealism and physical realities can be much more closely approximated by careful, consistent training than it is now, or ever has been in the past. Every advance toward it will add to the strength of marriage as an institution by increasing the proportion of those who find lasting satisfaction in fidelity to its obligations.

Surprisingly enough, the emotional story tends to be neglected by some mothers and fathers who pride themselves on being modern and telling their children all the facts. They present the facts in a bleak, mechanical, unattractive light.

Hygiene lectures and the biology-course methods of advanced schools have been criticized on this same score. To me this criticism seems unfair, because classes and lecture groups do not provide the setting for an unself-conscious, free-ranging discussion of personal, emotional interests. Home influences, beginning in very early childhood, supply the proper background.

Parents can create a wholesome, well-balanced, perspec-

tive by attitude as well as by actual words. They can work toward this ideal through emphasis from the beginning upon love, companionship and romance, combined with frankness and absence of prudery in the complete sex information they supply.

The endeavor to inspire children with idealism can proceed on a sound working basis only when realism and idealism are fused. We build upon a fallacy that may cause our finest plans to collapse when we do not reconcile ourselves to the truth that nothing we can do or say, or leave unsaid, will prevent sex urges from developing. They will appear strongly in adolescence, at the latest, either as direct interest or as self-conscious shyness and inhibitions. Unlike some other impulses that demand our attention in children, sex impulses are not largely created by influences from outside. A preponderant part of this instinct comes spontaneously from within every healthy body.

We can teach control, decency, sensible sublimation—and foreswear any training that clutters an undeniable instinct with false ideas. That is all, but that is enough.

The unwise way in which many sincere parents—misled by their zeal to have their children clean and fine—deal with problems in the sex field is most evident in the attitude toward deliberate self-arousal and sex gratification through self-manipulation.

Under the influence of enlightened lectures to mothers and fathers, to boys in Y.M.C.A. classes, and elsewhere, there has been some improvement in the approach. Still the destructive error that “‘self-abuse’ is such a horrible habit that loss of will power and insanity are sure to result” is being harped upon by masses of mothers and fathers. It

leaves its mark of false terror and false disgrace quite inexcusably upon the personalities of their boys and girls.

The idea that this undesirable habit does any physical harm or has any direct relation to mental disease was abandoned long ago by the medical profession. Psychologic harm can come, of course, not from the habit itself, but from the shadow of degradation that uninformed talk puts upon it.

Dire threats are worse than futile. They stir up intense interest, sharpened by fear. More than thirty-five out of a hundred women of good reputation in large representative groups admit in anonymous questionnaires that they have indulged in this practice. Many disclose that they started because of childish curiosity aroused by warnings. Careful studies covering large numbers show that self-gratification in sex is practiced to some extent by practically all boys. Here, too, the usual type of threat seems to do more to suggest than to prevent.

As to the truth of the threats—Comparisons between the marital happiness of the women who confess to this indulgence before marriage and the marital happiness of those who deny it indicate that those who have indulged have at least as much chance of being happy in marriage as the others. It is apparent on the face of it that the practice does not usually prevent happy marriages for men; with almost universal indulgence among adolescent boys, there would be practically no happy marriages if it did.

Exactly what should we say on this problem to children in the pre-adolescent period? We should tell them the truth. They should be instructed that sex instincts must be controlled, as other healthy appetites are controlled. It is

fair, honest, and helpful to tell them that the more they yield to the habit the harder it will be to stop.

Outgoing companionship and friend-making, play, work, and learning, should be dramatized as the channels into which this energy should be directed before marriage. Children should not see literature, photographs, drawings, and movies of the blatantly "sexy" variety. For adolescents especially, the ban against idle rumination should be strict. They should be kept busy, interested, and outward-looking—which will not be so difficult if careful early training has developed their skills, alertness, and emotional balance.

They should receive the honest advice that when they turn their sex impulses back upon their own bodies they do not make an advance in the direction of wholesome affection for others. This is not the same as the dour assertion that every indulgence will push them sharply backward into noticeable harm, the gross misrepresentation that saps the self-esteem of those whose efforts to conquer the temptation are not entirely successful. No parent can be sure that his boy or girl will be strong enough to resist, and counsel should be shaped with that in mind.

I do not believe it is wise or generally truthful to make the warnings any more severe than those in the foregoing paragraphs. For all average purposes, the hint that this habit means a failure to advance, rather than a positive injury, represents the actual condition.

Only in certain extreme and long-continued cases does the practice lead to a self-interest that is genuinely serious, a noticeable deterrent to outgoing sex-interest later in life. This is not a danger of alarming consequence for the great majority, and it will do more harm than good to drag the

possibility of narcissism into prominence in our discussion.

Such an emphasis would seem to some adolescents to imply a recommendation that outgoing sex experience should be sought immediately. The chances for psychology and emotional injury in this direction are greater than in the other in our present period of shifting standards.

SWEET SIXTEEN AND—

THE BOYS and girls who approach manhood and womanhood today encounter perplexing conditions. As their contacts outside the home broaden, they find that sex, about which their parents generally were reticent, is a chief topic of conversation. This probably will seem particularly true of the circles that may appear to inexperienced eyes to be the most up-to-date and alive intellectually.

To the added confusion of youthful observers, the promiscuity that mothers usually do not like to discuss, seems to be highly regarded in many brightly-jacketed, sensational novels. Boys and girls are likely to seek such literature at this stage of their growth. Interest is aroused by the increasing strength of their own inner stirrings. In their innocence they are apt to feel that the most shallow works addressed to "the mature intelligence" are less childish than Kipling's "Just So Stories."

Tenderly-reared daughters and sons are quick to point out that other girls and boys of their age dash near and far, early and late, in motor cars. They notice, too, with growing personal interest, that within the cars the dashing youngsters frequently are more near than far. They hear exciting comment, not too bitterly censorious, about certain intrepid spirits who advance beyond adolescent petting.

To cap this situation, great numbers of parents who are eager to give their maturing children reasons for following the convictions of their elders, have strayed from the religion that did so much in their own childhood to strengthen these convictions and to endow them with an authority beyond any debate. The plea that one kind of conduct is right and another is wrong simply because religion decrees it so, cannot touch children deeply if their training has installed no deep religious feeling.

By and large, present-day boys and girls are more prone than any of their ancestors to ask what returns our standards will deliver to them, individually and how soon. This widespread, self-centered, materialistic philosophy may seem disturbing, sordid, damning, to us. Still it is one to which our children are sure to be exposed.

"Times have changed since you were young!" boys and girls shout back from the far side of their bridge of adolescence to loved ones who suddenly may appear to have been left in a distant, alien land.

"You don't understand!" comes the second cry—the recurring complaints of youth to all the passing generations through the ages.

Probably the cries are truer in our swiftly moving time than they ever were before. At least to youth they seem to be truer. Youth is inclined to form its opinions, and to act, accordingly.

What can parents do to combat all this?

They can show their boys and girls that they do understand, but that understanding need not invariably mean approval. The basic values of life and living have not changed.

If children have been too much influenced by ultra-

modernism to respond to older ideals, the best way to lead them back is by reminting the time-tested ideals into the prevailing currency. Even parents who have given their sons and daughters a religious background, should provide them, in addition, with statements of the foundation of morals in terms that will forestall the possible effect of the current self-seeking, excitement chase.

The most modern of young people will respond to a plea for interesting, successful, living that brings direct returns. We can prove that the world actually is governed by standards of decency, and that life without ideals soon becomes dull. We usually will not have to go outside the list of persons known to our children for examples of the drabness that results from blundering along without guiding standards or an intelligent destination.

Mothers and fathers can demonstrate that they desire to have their sons and daughters obtain what they *really* want—continuing fullness of life, unmarred by a weakening of the principles upon which that fullness will depend at thirty years, forty years, and on into old age. A well-lived life can bring rewards at seventy that cannot be envisioned at twenty.

Let us hope the parents will not wait until their children reach adolescence before they begin the campaign. Habits of general self-control, emotional balance, and ideals that go back to earliest memories have so much stronger and more permanent force than tardily applied logical appeals. There is no doubt, however, that the campaign should be carried forward vigorously in adolescence and through the later teens. The growth of sex consciousness magnifies the chances that children will take a final, decisively wrong turn.

In the adolescent and postadolescent period the *positive* standard of potential romance in marriage should be held especially high. Girls and boys should be forcefully reminded that every day of their lives will demand selections—thoughtful or habit-driven—between various ways in which they can turn. They cannot go in two directions at the same time.

"Yes, I know the pull," the understanding father may say to his son, "but remember that when you go out after crude sex thrill you lessen your capacity to take a complete part in a more satisfying and durable affection relation. Those who do not fuse sex with real companionship, mutual interests, admiration, and some romance never attain the fullest possible sex experience. Some men train themselves so thoroughly in 'knowing about women' that they lose all ability to know about love."

A striking example of our happy-go-lucky thoughtlessness is that the drift is toward a more negative standard just when children reach the age at which their sex drive becomes more urgent. In the presence of girls and boys who are nearly grown there is a surprising tendency to take down the guard against cynical statements and light sex jokes.

Practically the first sex talk the average child hears in his house is of this looser brand, frequently from parents who neglected to give him well-balanced information in the years when he was picking up fascinating facts where he found them. Belated formal advice will not have much influence if the day by day remarks of parents and parents' friends suggest that their real beliefs are the opposite of what they advise in moments of seriousness.

Our way of talking can make our standards clearly evident, and still not give our boys and girls the impression that we advocate an idealism that is too fragile a flower to survive a chill breeze. We are seeking substantial decency; not thin false-fronts of it. Tension over "sex impurity," for example, is a danger sign in any girl or boy. It may indicate morbid preoccupation, inner conflict over unusually strong desire—or other characteristics that are the antithesis of authentic high-mindedness.

The counsel this mother gave her eighteen-year-old son is a model of precaution. He came to her in some distress, she relates, and complained that his whole evening at a fraternity dinner had been ruined because two boys whom he had considered his friends had told dirty stories.

"Now see here," his mother replied; "you never hear dirty stories at home. You know I am against them because they generally are a distorted, silly caricature of truths that I believe we should keep straight. Just the same, you are making a mistake if you despise and rule out people who are a pretty good sort because they occasionally say or do things you do not approve. You have enough to do if you keep yourself clean. You will have to live in the world as it is. Do not be too sensitive to face it. Your ideals are your help. Do not make them a hindrance."

In promoting positive idealism toward marriage, mothers and fathers whose own marriages have been comparative failures will have to watch themselves to keep their children from paying the penalty. These disillusioned ones should try to rise above their own disillusionment. They should project more than their own limited experience; not



flippantly ridicule nor deliberately deny the possibility of success where they have blundered.

Denials can be made in actions as well as in words. Bickering, quarreling, and complaints about one another are the constant routine of some husbands and wives who would be outraged if they were told that they had not preached happy marriages. Maybe they have preached—in sounding phrases drained of all authority by their behavior.

Personal example is powerful also in regard to the fidelity that fathers and mothers practice. The influence begins in early childhood—like all other influences—but culminates when children become more critical. A household of flirtations cannot expect its sons and daughters to have a strong conception of matrimonial loyalty.

Consider the household of a father who told me he discovered shortly after his honeymoon that his wife thought nothing of allowing any of their friends to make love to her.

"I knew she was fond of me," he said, "and always true to me when pressed to the final point. I'm broadminded and I didn't complain; but my idea that our marriage was going to be something special got a bad jolt. Since then I have been spooning a good deal myself with the good sports in our crowd—nothing serious, you understand; we all understood one another."

Yet he and his wife were surprised when they learned that their adolescent son and daughter have pretty shaky notions of sex morality. They have passed on to the children a staunch feeling for truthfulness and for honesty in regard to money, but they have failed to pass on an emotionally honest approach toward physical desire. They are

beginning to recognize this. Perhaps they have found out about themselves in time.

Fathers and mothers who go beyond flirtations into discreetly veiled affairs, will find it difficult to hide the fact from children. Granting that it can be hidden, the little evidences of divided affection, if not outright tension, which nearly always follow in the home are likely to have some effect upon wide-awake youngsters.

Errant husbands and wives who look upon themselves as essentially conservative, despite their dalliance, will not realize that their state of mind tends to cause them to underestimate the value of fidelity in training their children. In more outspoken groups the effect can often be seen at a glance.

I know a girl of eighteen years who brags that she is out to get all the straight sex experience she wants. Her father was somewhat embittered because he had a dilute craving for an artistic career that he could not realize. He has a leaning toward revolutionary philosophy, and always resented his wife's conventional conservatism. A clever conversationalist, he enjoyed baiting her by criticism of the established order. Other women comforted him. When his daughter reached her teens he began to call her attention to the amusing inconsistencies between the expressed ideals and some of the actualities in monogamous society.

This was all on the basis of intellectual discussion, needless to say. It was intended to keep the girl from being as narrow-minded as her mother; not for personal application. The father gave the daughter most of the affection her mother should have had. He defended her against much-needed discipline, asserting that it would only cramp her mind and spirit. Little by little she embraced her father's

free thought. She learned of his affairs—as was to be expected—but found it easy to sympathize with his desire for them.

His awakening to his daughter's bold, personal expression of the revolt he advocated, probably has come too late to stop her from a course he now is sure will be disastrous. A complete about-face in all his previous reasoning would look ridiculous to the keenly analytical girl, and she is too old to accept a flat command that she act differently.

Many who have tried to provide good training, who set a wholesome example by their own conduct, and who bemoan "the way things are going these days" actually drift with the tide a little more than they realize; for instance, the conscientious mother who complains to me that she does not know what under the sun to do about her fifteen-year-old daughter, on vacation from school.

The child is going every night to parties that last long after 12 o'clock, she says. Escorts around seventeen and eighteen sneak girls away from the parties for drinks at roadside taverns, and "sit out dances" in their parked cars. At some homes cocktails and highballs are served to the children.

Of course the parents of a few of the young hostesses do not tolerate such nonsense, the mother says. How about limiting her daughter to those homes?

"Why, it would break her heart if she did not get to go to a party every night of the holiday!" the mother exclaims. "Girls naturally try to get all the invitations they can on a big vacation-week like this. I want her to have a good time.

"What can a mother do nowadays?" she added, half

apologetically. "All of the child's friends go, and some of the very best parties are the worst."

Certainly the parties this mother regretfully tolerated were "the very best" in possibilities of exciting action for vivacious boys and girls. She had seemed to be on the verge of weeping about the recklessness of modern youth. Yet she will not interfere with "a good time" based on the number of invitations her fifteen-year-old girl "lands" in open competition under catch-as-catch-can rules.

Despite the most thoughtful guidance, petting will be an important question for teen-age children today. It is so generally accepted as a legitimate amusement that we cannot hope to keep most girls and boys away from temptation. All we can do is to show them its undesirable features and forearm them with a definite, predetermined attitude against which to test their inclinations.

We can make it plain that if straight physical attraction is attached continually to casual acquaintanceships, long-run interests and companionship values will be dwarfed. Those who habitually reduce affection to its lowest common denominator will be less able to work out the proposition of the highest, most uncommon denominator.

This is not fine-spun moralizing. It is a rather pressing, practical issue. Late-teen-age children frankly are petting now as often as the inclination is felt. Many of those who refuse to "go wrong" reach intimacies, by their own accounts, in which virginity is more a matter of a physical technicality than an emotional attitude.

I can see only two psychologic advantages in petting—both of them somewhat tenuous.

The first is that petting may help those who have an unnatural repugnance to normal physical contact to break

through their undesirably extreme reserve; but the saner and safer way is for parents to meet their training responsibilities when their children are young, so that no such unnatural aversions will exist.

From a practical standpoint, the boys who are unwholesomely repelled from physical sex and in a swirl of conflict over vague urges they do not understand, will be the last to ask girls to pet. Again speaking practically, the girls who are most inhibited and troubled will be the last ones to be asked, and the last to consent if they are.

The second of the doubtful advantages in petting is that it will teach its devotees that every surge of attraction is not love. The chances for psychic tensions from this romantic illusion were greater in our grandmother's day than in ours. Our adolescent and postadolescent girls and boys are being subjected to influences that are more likely to blind them to the truth that no love can endure on a physical foundation alone, however perfect.

I suspect exaggeration in the estimates of the number of young people who now "go the limit," as the horrified expression runs. Beyond doubt the proportion is greater than it was before 1920.

In any event, the reports of the increase will have about the same pull, whether true or untrue, upon a girl or boy who happens to be wavering toward following the supposed leaders. Then, too, a formerly effective check has been weakened by the admittedly greater tolerance that general public opinion now has for this conduct.

It might seem superfluous to advise an uncompromising opposition from parents toward this lack of control; but some of the same parents who are reticent about adequate

sex instruction for young children, still do not take a firm stand if their children veer into sex license in their late teens. They storm, weep, and beg at the first shock, but end by deciding there is nothing they can do.

Although no amount of persuasion can be fully effective with a practically grown person whose formative earlier training has not installed emotional balance and control, promiscuity is too serious in its consequences to justify an admission of defeat, no matter how late the date.

I have had to disagree with several modern mothers who told me they advised their young daughters who were having affairs that the least they could do was to tell their mother frankly when they became involved with a boy. I am sure that when parents listen tolerantly to such an admission, they create the impression that sex license is not as dangerous to satisfactory living as lack of frankness is. That simply is an erroneous idea—much as lack of frankness should be deplored.

Parents should take, and maintain, such a rigid attitude on this point, especially with girls, that reckless ones cannot entertain the slightest notion that promiscuity is condoned. "Especially with girls" because they run the risk of the heaviest social price, in addition to the price that boys and girls both pay for sex license in their dulled appreciation of enduring romance in marriage.

If a true, healthy perspective could be attained, most of morality for most of the world would not revolve around sex interest—an excessive interest revealed by the unimaginative search of some people for straight sex thrill, alone; by the extreme shyness, prudery, and tense revulsion of some others against sex realities; and by the amount of

time allotted by the majority to topics with an obvious sextinge in conversation, reading, and in the choices made among available stage plays and movies.

Many are disturbed because there is so much license in sex conduct at present. They rarely notice that this is only a part of a general trend. Lack of sex-discipline is directly related to the prevailing lack of self-discipline in all things. Healthy sex interest and sex control are firmly connected to a well-proportioned sense of values, to self-understanding, fundamental honesty, and stamina.

Depend upon it that adolescent girls and boys are likely to be too much attracted by the excitement of the moment—no questions asked—if their parents have not provided them in earlier childhood with these substantial psychology habits and with some vision of the personal satisfactions that come from well-planned, long-run living.

YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS

THE NEARER fathers and mothers come to a realization of the breadth of their responsibilities, the less they will trust to luck and unthinking parental love. "Is this behavior helping my child's prospects or injuring them?" is the question that will recur to them at every important turn. They will be prepared to act on the answer. They will think of the child's best interests in all their relations with him. As an illustration, the contrasting effect of happy and unhappy periods for parents can be seen in the personalities of children who grow up at different times in the same home. "When the fathers have eaten sour grapes . . . the children's teeth are set on edge"—unless the father, who probably has deep love for his children, also has enough *thoughtfulness* to hide moods that he would not like to have them copy.

I have never seen problems in young children whose brains and bodies were not subnormal that could not be solved by adult intelligence. I see many that parents say are unsolvable, and I see some normally endowed children who have been made to appear positively subnormal by their disastrous early training.

Despite the increasing tendency to consult a psychiatrist when children develop flaws in behavior, strong misconceptions persist. The psychiatrist performs no miracles

and pretends to no mystical endowment. He works with straightforward common sense and a hopeful attitude. He knows that the kind of people we become is largely the result of what happens to us in the first years of our lives. All of our environment and all our acts supply some part to this. The psychiatrist knows harmful habits can be corrected and constructive habits substituted for them in childhood by consistent, persevering work; and that the longer a habit has been practiced, the harder it will be to change.

An unvarying regime of patience, kindness, even temper, and deliberate planning among parents would produce a generation of adults so much better equipped for living than those of today that they would not seem to be of the same stock. This is our chance for a transformation that will seem miraculous—a miracle that will never come from the notion that a sort of magic gift absolves parents from all study and work.

Really excellent training would fit our children to inhibit the meaningless musings, the prejudices, and destructive emotions that drag upon our minds. Understanding themselves far better than the vast majority of men and women do now, they would have more understanding and sympathy for others. Self-confident and courageous, they would not be swayed by the petty jealousies, spites, and the cravings for revenge that tear at many of us. Self-controlled and self-directed, they would not falter under a surge of contradictory impulses when they should be decisive. Masters of their emotions, instead of slaves to them, they would make their emotions work to give them the utmost in lasting satisfactions and zest for life.

Such perfection in training is a distant call from the

muddling methods of the present; but if we could only inspire really intelligent parents to strive for it, they could at least approach the ideal. High achievement is not easy. Nor is it impossible for those who learn the underlying principles. Every normal baby presents material for a masterpiece—or a failure.

The thin sirups of fleetingly popular tunes often are based upon themes borrowed by Tin Pan Alley from great musical compositions. From the same comparatively simple elements, one man creates a symphony and the other turns out jazz. The symphony pulses with an individuality that lifts it above the commonplace. It moves forward with a suggestion of power and freedom. It seems to know where it wants to go, and how to get there; yet, beneath its infinite variety and unexpected turns, there always is essential simplicity. A musician can trace in it a clear pattern or a series of patterns.

"Hear how the earliest theme reappears again and again," he will say. "Each time it is changed a little. At this point it is combined with another primary theme. There it is joined by a secondary theme; but what comes out in every new phrase and movement is built upon what has gone before."

The jazz selection, which may amuse us today and is almost sure to bore us day after tomorrow, fails to develop and elaborate the elements from which the symphony makes music that will last. It either skips erratically to a succession of inconsistent sounds or remains trapped in its narrow groove of monotonous repetition. It has no striking originality, no suggestion of power or freedom, no growth toward constantly increasing enrichment.

Parents, like musicians, begin their work with compara-

tively simple thematic units—the untrained, unspoiled reflexes of their children. From the best material they can produce a poor composition if they do not know how to handle it. With somewhat weak basic elements they can achieve great things by careful strengthening, combination, and elaboration. To accomplish this, they must be able to recognize the main themes, the secondary themes, the harmonies and dissonances of their children's inclinations.

Unless they are willing to let chance influences write most of the score, they are faced squarely with the responsibility of choosing the themes they will strengthen and emphasize, which ones they will eliminate or make secondary. It is they who must conduct the rehearsals. Day after day, wittingly or unwittingly, they direct the practice—until the time comes when their children have to stand up alone, well or ill prepared, to play their life compositions before a critical world.

Whether mothers and fathers are creative or dull decides in the main whether the result will be inspiring or disappointing, beautiful or discordant, major or minor, sad or cheerful, triumphant or hopeless.

When parents think only of romantic slush, they can write and rehearse only tinkling little airs, limited in range and interest. When they know only incoherent living, they will be capable only of training for incoherent jumbles. If they learn to appreciate permanent values, they can plan for their child a life that will unfold like an enduring symphony.

INDEX

- Abilities, 87
- Abnormal, 11, 19
- Accomplishment, active personal, 68; standard of, 227
- Achievement, 81
- Action, commandable, 17; fundamental habits of, 29; prompt corrective, 191
- Activities, 99
- Activity, purposeful, 92
- Adaptability, 224, 227
- Adjustment, 49; sex, 229
- Adult dictation, 72; intelligence, 283
- Adventures, sex, 260
- Affection, 23
- Aggression, 6, 251
- Allowance, 111, 174
- Amazement, 66
- Ambition, 82
- Amusement, 66, 68, 86
- Ancestors, 3, 24
- Anger, 24
- Animal, 243
- Appetite, 132 ff.
- Associations, emotional, 187
- Attitudes, emotional, 17, 29, 46, 47; sex, 248
- Attractiveness, 196 ff., 208
- Automatic skills, 79
- Bagehot, Walter, 90
- Bain, Dr. Winifred E., 197
- Balance, emotional, 273
- Beethoven, 67
- Behavior, 15, 32, 42, 47; encouragements for desirable, 255; patterns, 20, 26, 33; problems, 121
- Behaviorism, 7, 16
- Biology, 243, 244, 266
- Births, 238
- Bitterness, 168
- Blanket-wrapping, 170
- Bodily structure, 17, 18
- Boldfront, 193, 194
- Braver world, 185 ff.
- Brendel, Ulric, 158
- Broadcasts, 67
- Capacities and incapacities, 17
- Carelessness, 62
- Carman, Bliss, 87
- Character development, 73; problems, 2
- Child, second, 218
- Children's welfare, 13; rights, 197
- Choices, 224
- Chores, 105
- Cleanliness, 63
- Colic, 120
- Common sense, 4, 5, 284
- Companionship, 244, 259, 265, 267, 279; with parents, 60, 61
- Complexes, 9, 217
- Confusion, psychologic, 15
- Conrad, 152
- Conscious decision, 224
- Consciousness, sex, 252, 273
- Constitutional flaws, 12; predisposition, 19

- Consummation, 265
 Control, sex, 282
 Co-ordination, 17, 33, 80
 Correction, 20
 Cortex, 26
 Courage, 182, 185
 Courtesy, 197
 Curiosity, 268

 Daydreaming, 9, 147, 171 (note)
 Decency, 267, 273
 Decision, conscious, 224
 Decisiveness, 225
 Defeat, 41
 Defeatist attitude, 31
 Depression, 146
 Dewey, John, 82
 Disability, enjoyment of, 130
 Discipline, 15, 45, 50, 51, 57, 80, 121, 282; sensible, 142
 Disgust, 262 ff.
 Dishonesty, deliberate, 160, 171 (note); punishment for, 168; rewards for, 162, 164; snobbishly inspired, 174
 Doing, learning by, 68, 69
 Dramatization, 149
 Dryden, 152

 Education, ultramodern, 64 ff.
 Effective, 135
 Effeminacy, 251
 Effeminate, 253
 Electra complex, 217
 Emotional associations, 187; attitudes, 17, 29, 46, 47; balance, 130, 269, 273; basis, 130; difficulties, 116; habits, 95; injury, 270
 Emotions of parents, 37
 Employment plans for children, 99 ff.
 Energies, outlet for, 99
 Energy, 90, 111, 113; well-directed, 17
 Enthusiasm, 101

 Equipment, native, 17, 23
 Escapades, 256 ff.
 Evasion, 229
 Evasiveness, shy, 194
 Excitements, 64 ff.
 Experience, sex, 274, 277

 Facial expression, 207
 Fairy tales, 151 ff.
 Fantasy, 151
 Faults, 18; admission of, 169
 Favoritism, 213, 218
 Fear, 24, 180, 186, 188; satisfactions from, 189
 Fearfulness, 22, 179, 194
 Feminine, 248 ff., 266
 Fixations, 217
 Flaws, 12
 Flexibility, 21
 Flexner, Abraham, 74
 Foibles, 3
 Frankness, 281
 Friendless, 201
 Friendliness, 202 ff.
 Frigidity, 265
 Froebel, 74

 Generosity, 199 ff.
 Genius, 17
 Gifts, natural, 17
 Glandular, 1, 136, 137, 249
 Goudey, Earle, 241
 Grandparents, 52, 53, 113
 Group, ideals of their, 175
 Guidance, 15, 57, 198
 Guilt, 259

 Habit patterns, 22, 39, 142; routines, 28; training, 43
 Habits, 27; of action, 29; bad, 32 ff.; constructive, 284; emotional, 95, 147; harmful, 13, 284; substantial psychologic, 282; work, 86, 87, 89, 90, 94, 96, 100, 157
 Happiness, 24, 30, 114, 115
 Hartman, Gertrude, 77

- Heredity, 99
 Heritage, 118
 Hollywood, 67
 Homosexual, 248, 249
 Homosexuality, 253
 Honesty, 161, 168 ff., 234; penalties on, 162, 164
 Humiliation, 41, 51
 Hygiene lectures, 266
 Idealism, 267; toward marriage, 275
 Ideals, dominant, 175
 Illness, 130
 Immobilization, 55
 Impulses, 6; contradictory, 284; new direction of, 21; sex, 267
 Inaptitudes, 17
 Independence, personal, 224
 Individuality, 7
 Infantile world, 223
 Inferiority, 73, 194, 213
 Influences, cultural, 66
 Information, 230-234
 Inhibitions, 267
 Injury, psychologic and emotional, 270
 Injustice, 57, 164
 Insanity, dread of, 118
 Instability, 113, 118
 Instincts, sex, 268
 Intelligence, adult, 283
 Interest, 83; alert, 115
 Introspection, 199
 Intuition, 2
 Invalidism, 124 ff., 130, 132, 136
 Inversion, sexual, 249
 Isolation, 149
 Issues, 40, 41
 James, William, 195
 Jealousy, 22, 212 ff., 253
 Justice, 57
 Kindergarten, 93, 106
 Kipling, 109, 209, 271
 Knowledge, 17, 18
 Laziness, 111
 Leisure, 86, 153
 Liars, 159 ff.
 Lie, 42
 Lies, 174
 Likability, 198, 211
 Likableness, 205, 208
 Lincoln, Abraham, 116
 Lying, chronic, 43
 Make-believe, 155
 Maladjustments, 3, 21, 202; marital, 239
 Manipulative habits, 95
 Mannerisms, 207, 209
 Marriage, 229, 239, 242, 264, 265
 Masculine, 20, 248, 253, 254, 266
 Materialistic philosophy, 272
 Means, Hughes, 77
 Menstruation, 243, 244
 Meyer, Adolf, 16
 Mill, John Stuart, 4
 Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 64, 65
 Misbehavior, 52
 Moods, 140 ff.
 Morality, children's, 259; sex, 276
 Motherhood, 239
 Motion pictures, 66
 Muscles, new pathways for control of, 209
 Narcissism, 270
 Negation, 195
 Nervous tensions, harmful, 26
 Neurologic disability, 209
 Neuromuscular differences, 208
 Normal, 11, 18
 Oedipus complex, 217
 One-sidedness, 99, 262
 Overanxiety, 136
 Overbashful, 247
 Overbold, 247
 Overpetting, 136
 Oversensitiveness, 33
 Oversevere, 168

- Overseverity, 51, 57
 Ownership, 172
 Pain, 10, 145
 Paralysis, 208
 Paranoid attitudes, 10
 Parties, 278
 Pattern behavior, 22; buried habit-
 ual, 30
 Patterns, harmful, 13, 26; psycho-
 logic, 94; useful, 13
 Pavlov, 16, 28
 Penalties, 57
 Perseverance, 62, 91
 Petting, 271, 279
 Physical affection, 217; interest,
 260; realities, 266
 Play, sex, 262
 Pleasure, 10, 144, 145; immediate,
 88
 Predisposition, constitutional, 19
 Pregnancy, 243
 Premium, 223
 Progressive education, 82
 Promiscuity, 271, 281
 Property rights, 173
 Proverbs, 16
 Psychiatrist, 220, 249, 283, 284
 Psychiatry, 21
 Psychoanalysis, 7
 Psychoanalyst, 4, 218
 Psychologic confusion, 15; dan-
 gers, 72; habits, 282; handicaps,
 25; harm, 268; injury, 270;
 possibilities, 13; training, 21
 (note), 161; truths, 16
 Psychology, 7, 16; realistic, 78
 Puberty, 21, 230
 Punishment, 50, 51, 57, 149, 260;
 angry, 165, 185; physical, 44 ff.;
 unjust, 167
 Radio, 64 ff., 77
 Rage, 143, 145
 Reactions, avoidance, 182; ele-
 mental, 26; habitual, 14; in-
 born, 25
 Reality, 77
 Reasoning, 55
 Recognition, quiet, 176
 Reflexes, 286; automatic, 26; ele-
 mental, 94
 Religion, 272
 Remunerations, 87
 Repetition, 79
 "Repression, no," 1, 4, 6, 7, 74
 Repression, reasonable, 260; sex, 9
 Resentment, 51
 Responses, unconditioned, 22
 Reward, 32, 42, 224
 Romance in marriage, 274; in sex,
 229, 242, 267
 Roosevelt, Theodore, 107
 Routine, 76, 79, 80, 83
 Scattering of interests, 80
 Second child, 218
 "Self-abuse," 267
 Self-boredom, 114
 Self-confidence, 185
 Self-confident, 284
 Self-control, 224
 Self-expression, 182
 Self-pity, 22, 41, 50
 Self-realization, 76, 77
 Self-reliance, 157
 Self-rewards and self-punishments,
 47
 Selfishness, 22, 199-201, 207
 Sex, 228 ff., 271 ff.; adjustment,
 229; adventures, 260; complexi-
 ties, 20; consciousness, 245; con-
 trol, 282; curiosity, 161; educa-
 tion, 228, 247; instruction, 281;
 pattern, normal, 255; play, 161,
 257, 259, 262; realities, 237;
 rumination, 280; truth, 228 ff.
 Sexual inversion, 249
 Shakespeare, William, 67
 Shedd, 83
 Shumaker, Ann, 75 (note), 77
 Sixteen, sweet, 271
 Skills, 17, 29, 30, 79, 80, 83

- Sociability, 206
Spank, 44 ff.
Stamina, 29, 81, 83, 282
Standards, shifting, 270
Stevenson, 16, 31
Straightforwardness, 159, 175
Structure, bodily, 17, 18
Sublimation, sensible, 267
Superiority, 17, 219
Suppression, 5
Swift, 102

Talents, 17
Tantrum, 11, 142, 149
Temper, 11, 25, 26, 50, 141
Terrors, 190
Thefts, 172, 174
Thoreau, 242
Thrills, 68
Thumb sucking, 153
Timidity, 178 ff., 183, 185, 188, 195
Todd, Mary, 117
Tomboyishness, 254
Truth, 228 ff., 243

Ultramodernism, 272, 273
Ultraprogressive groups, 69

Unconditioned responses, 22
Unconscious, 4, 5, 26
Undressing, 245-247
Unemployment, 85, 86
Unfriendliness, 202, 207
Unhappiness, 33, 144, 145, 148-150
Unreconciled conflict, 5
Unselfishness, 199
Untrustworthiness, 168
Urges, 5; sex, 267
Usefulness, 80

Vacation in summer, 93
Veblen, Thorstein, 79
Virginity, 240, 264
von Sacher-Masoch, 9
Vulgar statements, 237

"Wages," 111
Washington, George, 169
Watson, John, 16, 182
Willfulness, 19, 20, 53
Words, use of, 94
Work habits, 17, 86, 87, 89, 90, 100, 157
Wrapped, 192